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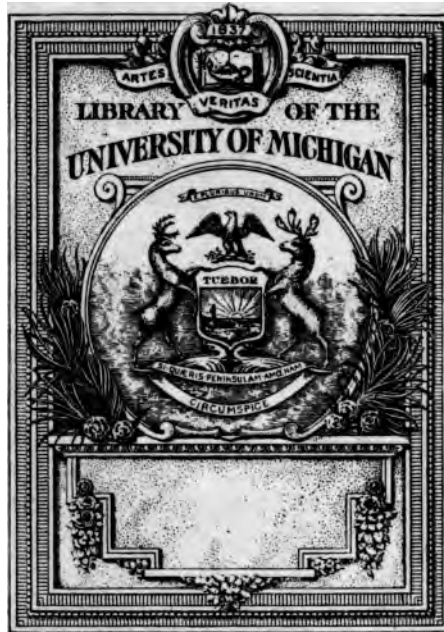
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THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

The efficiency of any profession depends in large measure upon the degree to which it becomes scientific. The . . . profession will improve in proportion as its members direct their daily work by the scientific spirit and methods, that is, by honest, open-minded consideration of facts, by freedom from superstitions, fancies or unverified guesses, and in proportion as the leaders . . . direct their choices of methods by the results of scientific investigation rather than by general opinion.

EDWARD LEE THORNDIKE.

**THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY
A DYNAMIC FACTOR IN
EDUCATION**

BY

SOPHY H. POWELL *ms. Sophie will receive*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY JOHN COTTON DANA

**THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY
WHITE PLAINS, N. Y., AND NEW YORK CITY
1917**



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To
M. M. P.

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PREFACE

This book is addressed to those interested in children, whether teachers, librarians or parents. It has not been written from the standpoint of any one group, because there seems to be a need for a study of library work with children based upon broad educational principles and concrete facts, and not upon the opinions of any one class of workers. It does not present definite conclusions or technical information which is already available; but it is submitted as a basis for further discussion.

School authorities are often indifferent to the value of libraries for children; librarians are none too familiar with educational ideas and ideals, and frequently seem to judge modern education, not by its aims but by its immediate accomplishments. While the teacher is likely to underestimate the value of books other than text books, the librarian is in danger of over-emphasizing the esthetic and literary values of reading for children, and of overlooking the tremendous changes in the attitude of the educational world toward books, due to developments in sociology, psychology, applied science and industry. The statements of educators and of librarians in regard to children's reading bear an astonishing similarity; yet it seems to be the general opinion among librarians, judging from their printed words, that the school gives too little attention to the cultural side of books and reading. This book is pre-

sented in the hope that it will help librarians to understand better the modern educational attitude toward children in relation to books, and teachers to appreciate the value of the work which could be done by the public library for the schools.

The function of the public library as a continuation school has not been fully recognized. How to educate adolescent children, who are often working children, is a problem as yet unsolved. The use of books in vocational and trade education is especially emphasized, partly because such training is well within the pale of liberal culture if properly handled, and partly because the significance of books as literature has been adequately treated elsewhere. Whatever doubts one may have about vocational education, in some form or other, it is here to stay, and probably for others than prospective wage earners. The public library as yet plays a small part in the lives of working children. Here is an attempt at an explanation of this fact, with suggestions which may help to make the library more useful to that class for which it has always been primarily intended—those unable to take advantage of formal education.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge indebtedness to those who have read the manuscript in whole or in part and have contributed criticisms and suggestions.

S. H. P.

Glen Ridge, New Jersey
January 20, 1917

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INTRODUCTION

A careful study of the relations of children's reading to teachers, parents and librarians has long been needed, and this is precisely what Mrs. Powell has given us. Her book is a cool and dispassionate statement of facts. Included in the facts are not only the relations which children's reading bears to schools, to libraries and to homes, but also the opinions on these relations which are held by the advocates of the varied theories that have arisen in recent years as to what those relations should be. Extremists on either side of the many questions that the modern practice of guiding children's reading has brought forward, may find here what seem at first to be special pleas for and against their several theories. Investigation will show them that, in the progress of her study, the author has but calmly presented both sides, letting conclusions fall with the weight of testimony, as they should.

The equipment of the author for the production of such a book as this, a book which will rank among the few careful studies yet made of any part of the public librarian's field, is of interest and value to the reader and should be noted. The manner in which the book was written, the process, that is, by which it grew from a preliminary study of writings on the immediate subject to a careful examination of so much of the whole

field of education as is covered by the voluntary, guided and obligatory reading of children,—this also is worthy of brief presentation. A new author speaking on a debatable subject is entitled to have her claims for a hearing fairly set forth, even though, as here, she may make somewhat of a protest against such a presentation in her own book.

Before her marriage Mrs. Powell had wide experience in library practice. After graduating from the Pratt Institute Library School she worked in the Osterhout Free Library of Wilkes-Barre; in a branch library in Cleveland; in New York as a children's librarian; and then in Queensborough as branch librarian. She also organized a library in Hazleton, Pennsylvania.

From her report of her library experience it is evident that she was an enthusiastic advocate of the teaching and entertaining attitude of public libraries toward young people. As time passed and her experience broadened she came to the conclusion that work done from this attitude was not as satisfactory and helpful in the long run as the enthusiasm of others, and as the personal pleasure she had herself derived from it, had led her to think it was. At length, having more leisure for thinking and study, she found herself asking two questions, "Is the position which public libraries have taken in recent years toward children's reading, the proper and helpful one? That is, should public libraries enter the formal education field, and if so, how far ought they to venture therein?"

To those questions her book is the answer,—an

answer brought forth by some four years of intensive study, including an examination, not only of the literature of the subject, but also of the actual practice in such libraries as those of St. Louis, Chicago, and Philadelphia. She studied, observed and talked with both teachers and librarians, getting at their theories and learning of their work.

And so, for several years, the book grew, widening in scope as new studies opened the field, and becoming each year more truly a presentation of all aspects of the subject and less a series of arguments in favor of any group of theories. Even after it was complete, as she tried to believe, in content and amply scientific in manner, and after it had been accepted for publication, Mrs. Powell continued to subject it to careful scrutiny and to a resulting revision, in an effort to free her book of statements born merely of enthusiasm or prejudice and to make it tell precisely what her studies disclosed, and no more.

The preface says, in confirmation of what has been here set down, that this book "does not present definite conclusions, or technical information which is already available; but it is submitted as a basis for further discussion." For this purpose it is admirably full and rich. It discusses the place of reading in education, the history of books and libraries for children and of the library in the elementary school; and then goes on to the high school, to the library itself, to the latter's place in education and to the special activities of the library toward children which have been so highly de-

veloped in recent years. It opens out a wide field, and one may well say that, for some years to come, any enthusiastic advocate of any special cult in library service for children, who attempts to uphold his theory without having first examined carefully the facts this book presents, will find himself very poorly equipped for his task.

JOHN COTTON DANA

Newark, New Jersey
March, 1917.

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY: A DYNAMIC FACTOR IN EDUCATION

CHAPTER ONE

THE PLACE OF BOOKS IN EDUCATION

Although much has been written and said about the influence of books, few learn to read; that is, to assimilate ideas from a printed page. Printed characters are still comparatively new to the human mind, and the mastery of them is not nearly complete. Furthermore, the use of books generally has been taught according to medieval and even ancient conceptions, which do not fit modern requirements. As a result, the reading of the majority is aimless and superficial, and confined largely to newspapers and magazines; and there is too little practical recognition of the service which books and periodicals might be made to perform in modern industry and business. Books are not used enough by those who should be getting practical help from them, and are depended upon too much by a small number who regard them chiefly as aids to culture.

The reading done by children, which is important

from both a cultural and a practical standpoint and which should make them reading men and women, usually fails to acquaint them with books as sources of help and information in their hobbies and other interests. Nor does it develop in them a discriminating taste, because reading as a merely mechanical art is difficult for young children. Serious reading habits are acquired only after long and patient practice and by some not at all.¹ Many educational authorities contend, therefore, that school children should do most of their reading in school, or at least under the direction of teachers, whose constant supervision might help them to master some of its difficulties; also that children's reading generally should not be hampered by the indiscriminate use of public library books by which the child is liable to destroy any skill in the use of print he may be in the way of acquiring.

Some librarians have maintained, on the other hand, that young people will read out of school, and that the public library should furnish them with the proper kind of reading, which, in contrast to that done in school, should be chiefly recreational and cultural. This implies that everything done in school is irksome, and that all outside reading is recreation, an opinion which does not seem to be justified by the facts. Publishers of the five-cent weeklies report that the boy of

¹"It is a sad and significant fact that most people who attend public schools never learn to read even the most simple material with a fair degree of ease and speed. Most people find the reading of a simple story or the morning paper a tiring and difficult task. Reading is drudgery for most of them because they have never mastered the mechanics of the process. The most difficult part of elementary school work is learning to read, and it is the one in which the least satisfactory results have been secured."—Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 76 (1916).

to-day wants technical books. Even if he uses the public library for recreational reading, he will also read his "Bowery Billy" until he acquires more serious interests. The cultural and literary side of education receives much attention from the leaders in school matters, as is shown by the amount of material on this subject, and they have the assistance of child experts and the advantage of long years of experience with children. To be sure the school is not yet able to apply psychological principles to the education of all children. Much less has the public library the means by which to discover those children to whom reading is a hindrance rather than a help. The public library is supported by public funds upon the theory that it is part of the educational system; therefore, in dealing with school children it should proceed only in cooperation with the older institution. The librarian is necessarily the book expert, not the child expert.

In maintaining children's rooms in public libraries, many librarians have sought to give each child a substitute for a well chosen private library in which to browse. Well selected books in a home usually imply well educated and cultivated parents; in the school the use of such books is accompanied by constant supervision and study and thus in both instances the influence of books is only one of the many factors of environment. To duplicate the child's library, without being able to duplicate the condition of his being well born, without the subtle refinements of a good home, and also without the supervision possible in the school—and the public library cannot and does not give such

supervision—will not produce even approximately similar results. On the other hand, there have been certain consequences of the indiscriminate and excessive use of libraries by school children which have been unforeseen and not always desirable.

First, there is the possible hindrance to school work due chiefly to the library's independence of the school. Probably Doctor Brumbaugh expressed the opinion of many educators when he said, "The free use of libraries undirected is a pernicious practice. It is far better to have the teachers select and restrict the reading of the pupils. Many a complaint of poor work is due to the fact that the mental energy of the pupil is appropriated to reading books of no value in his educational progress, leaving him dull and listless for the specific work of the schools."² Since only about half the school children are getting more than a smattering of an education,³ such a complaint is not without significance. At a time when the backward child is making no progress in his classes, and as a result is in danger of drifting with scanty equipment into the ranks of unskilled labor, neither public library nor school points out to him the value of books as vocational aids. When vocational guidance is given it is usually to high school pupils; thus the great majority of children who are about to go to work receive no benefit. Some changes in the right direction have been made in the child labor laws, but they provide, for the most part, that

² National education association, Proceedings, 1900: 169-74.

³ Less than half the children finish well more than the first six grades, only one-fourth enter high school, and only one child in ten goes through high school. Ayers, Laggards in our schools, 4 (1909); U. S. commissioner of education, Report, 1911:I,xiii.

children may leave school at a certain age, and specify no grade which the children must have reached or finished. Accordingly, many children leave school before they finish the sixth grade, before vocational guidance or help has been offered them. In one typical industrial city⁴ over half the working papers were issued to children from the fourth, fifth and sixth grades.

The librarian is sometimes misled into thinking that he is accomplishing satisfactory results, by the fact that the children who come to the public library show an overpowering eagerness to get "liberries." Young people generally pass through a reading crazy period, which may begin at eight and last until fourteen or sixteen.⁵ The library is able to gratify the desires of such children, but the librarian does not and perhaps cannot decide when this craze is merely a waste of mental energy, and there are no available records which show that he is able to use this craze to promote reading habits that will be increasingly useful.

This does not mean that young people may not profitably use a public library. They would use books just as eagerly if they could find material upon the subjects to which their tastes and aptitudes directed them. In any case the school record of each child seems to offer the only sure basis for determining whether he should be allowed to stuff himself with thoroughly innocuous literature or whether he should be directed to books which will establish a definite aim

⁴ Van Sickle, Report on the examination of the school system of Bridgeport, Conn., 63-5 (1913).

⁵ See Bullock, Some observations on children's reading. National education association, Proceedings, 1897: 1015-21; Vostrovsky, A study of children's reading tastes. Pedagogical Seminary, 6:523-35 (1898).

in reading. This individual direction is possible only in the school, and is the business of the school. The library furnishes it only spasmodically at best, and is not equipped either with money or methods to assume what is clearly a teaching function.

Few wage earners are aware of the contribution that books could make to their progress by increasing the range of choice of vocation or by furnishing technical information by means of which they might get better jobs. The librarian is likely to overlook the opportunity for such service because he has no way of classifying the interests of readers except according to their reading tastes, which, in the case of children, may be entirely disassociated from their interest in doing things. Theoretically maintained as an educational institution for those who cannot afford to buy their own books or otherwise continue their education, the public library sometimes seems to be conducted upon the theory that its mission is chiefly to provide good literature for those who have learned to like it, thus neglecting the interests of the child as prospective wage earner. It is only natural, therefore, that when they go to work young people too often fail to recognize the library as an agency which can be of practical help to them. There seems to be nothing which leads out from their use of the children's room into the use which intelligent working men may make of a public library. By insisting that only literature so-called can be read for pleasure and by over-emphasizing the value of good literature, some librarians have brought it about that the library is considered as chiefly recreational in its

function; an opinion which is not confined to the "public," but prevails among sociologists and educators.

These may be some of the reasons why so few wage earners are using our public libraries in a serious way. Although some attempts have been made in this direction, there is no far-reaching, systematic method whereby children are taught either by the library or by the public school to use a public library for other than recreational purposes. Yet one of the earliest developments of the public or free library idea was the apprentices' library for working boys and girls. Mr. Andrew Carnegie has declared that the benefits which he, as a working boy, derived from books was the direct inspiration of his gifts to public libraries, that other working boys might be helped by books.*

If the librarian's attention is given mainly to school children already provided for, instead of to working children for whom the public library is the only educational resource, the latter will certainly suffer from neglect, since there is neither time, money, nor energy for the service of both.

It has been claimed that the only way to reach the older children is by encouraging them to make free and

* "My own personal experience may have led me to value a free library beyond all other forms of beneficence. When I was a boy in Pittsburgh, Col. Anderson of Allegheny—a name I can never speak without feelings of devotional gratitude—opened his little library to boys. Every Saturday afternoon he was himself in attendance at his home to exchange books. No one but him who has felt it can know the intense longing with which the arrival of Saturday was awaited, that a new book might be had. My brother and Mr. Phipps who have been my principal business partners through life, shared with me Col. Anderson's precious generosity, and it was when reveling in these treasures that I resolved that if ever wealth came to me it should be used to establish free libraries, that other boys might receive opportunities similar to those for which we were indebted to that noble man." In Adams, Public libraries and popular education. Home education bulletin (N. Y. state), 31:61.

unrestricted use of the library from early years. This practice has been followed for over fifteen years; yet librarians complain that the adolescent child is not using the library. The adolescent child in the majority of cases is the working child, and the library does not know his interests, nor is it prepared to further them. If the teaching of school children to use a public library will result in their using it when they become working children, it should be encouraged in all possible ways. Even so, who is to direct such lessons? If the library continues to do so, the librarian cannot afford to work independently of the schools and of the information as to individual children which only the teacher can give. However well or ill the school may be meeting its responsibilities, the teacher knows the child and his needs better than the librarian can. It is possible to teach children how to use a library without allowing them to monopolize the librarians' attention or to crowd out those beyond school age. It is not necessary to attract the younger children to the children's room every day in the week, making thoughtful work on the part of the librarian impossible, in order to teach them how to use books intelligently. Such a practice does not acquaint them with the best uses of the library, and if it did, there is a less expensive and a more effective way to accomplish the desired result. One such way is suggested by the system of education in use at Gary, Indiana, where the children are assigned in small groups to library hours, and where a special literature teacher interviews each child several times a week as to his reading interests. The librarian,

like the teacher, cannot do good work with large groups of children.

In considering libraries for children, it is necessary also to recognize the changing attitude toward books on the part of progressive educators. Educational authorities such as Dewey, McMurry, and Huey, suggest the entire elimination of reading from the first three years of the child's school life, that is, to about his tenth year. Doctor Klapper⁷ gives their reasons very concisely. The first is hygienic. Reading requires certain functions of the eyes for which they were not primarily designed. The untrained eye of the young child should not be subjected to this unusual strain upon nerves and muscles without due recognition of this fact.⁸ If all the books used by young children in the library had the proper kind of paper, print and spacing, educators might feel less reluctant to have children read outside of school. But unfortunately an examination of large numbers of children's books convinces one that while the books in the ordinary children's room have been chosen carefully with regard to literary and artistic quality, less study has been given to the physiological requirements of young children's eyes. One very popular series found in nearly all children's rooms violates in almost every particular

⁷ Teaching children to read, 1914.

⁸ Some of the considerations touching the physiology and hygiene of the eye as they affect the reading of young children may be found in: Briggs, Eye and the printed page. Education, 33: 559-62; Cohn, Hygiene of the eye, 215-9; Dearborn, The psychology of reading, Columbia university, Contributions to philosophy and psychology, XIV, no. 1 (1906); Koopman, Eye and the printed page. Education, 33: 503-9; Kotelmann and Bergstrom, School hygiene, 239-78; Patrick, Should children under ten learn to read and write? Popular Science Monthly, 54: 382-91; Shaw, School hygiene, 170-95; Whipple, Eye and the printed page. Education, 33: 552-8.

the rules for the kind of book a young child ought to read. The print is too fine, the lines too close together and too long, and the paper glazed.

Further considerations are advanced by these authorities against the reading of young children upon psychological grounds. The act of reading requires fine psychological adjustments, and the coarser adjustments should come first. Concrete knowledge by means of observation and sensation should be taught before symbolism. Bad mental habits result from the concentration on symbolism, because the interpretation of symbols is opposed to the child's natural cravings and interests. Reading (interpretation of symbols) requires him to concentrate in a way for which he is not equipped. Consequently his mind wanders, and the habit of concentration is weakened before it is fairly formed. "Taking our school population as a whole," says one educator, "I do not believe there is more than one in ten who will be much benefited by such reading as he is likely to do in early childhood; and this mainly on account of the excess of it, which often forms a glaze over the intelligence and sensibilities, or else induces a grasshopper habit of skipping from page to page in search of exciting episodes."

The reading process is so difficult for young children that mental effort is concentrated upon the deciphering of the symbols and not on the thought. Thus a child acquires early the habit of reading without thought.

There are also social considerations advanced

⁹ Russell, Voluntary reading in the elementary school. *School Review*, 13: 166 (1905).

against early reading, which it is said, is too individualistic for the young child. He should be taught social duties. The culture epoch theory, accepted by one group of psychologists, simply reinforces the idea that a young child like the young race is fitted for other activities than the highly complicated one of reading.

From the pedagogical point of view much valuable time is lost in the attempt to teach a child a very difficult process which he would find easy a little later on. According to this theory, other activities are more helpful than reading. The interests and the means of development for the young child lie in doing things. He needs more physical activity than he is likely to get through our present educational methods. Consequently, young children ought to be discouraged from reading. This does not mean that they should be deprived of the literature suitable to their years, for teachers can read to them and cultivate in them a much more unusual faculty than that of reading—the faculty of listening. For example, poetry was intended to be sung and heard and not to be read silently. Children with their instinct for rhythm readily learn to appreciate verse at an early age if it be read to them properly. Folk tales and fairy stories, which are so well adapted to the early years of childhood are of greater advantage to children when dramatized than when read. Folk dances, songs, and games make literature live for children; whereas on a printed page it is likely to be lifeless and cold.³⁰ These methods

³⁰ See Chubb, *Festivals and plays* (1912).

are not unknown in the modern school room, where the dramatization of legends and tales is part of the routine. In some such way literature should be translated into action, then the children can be shown how the knowledge to be gained from books may supplement activity.

The recreational value of reading literature cannot be urged against these conclusions, since a child will approach books just as eagerly if he finds them telling him how to do things as if they were so-called pure literature which some adults read for rest and recreation. Such a thought may not meet with ready acceptance among librarians, whose tools are books, and whose every performance centres in and around books. As Professor Huey remarks, "The written or printed 'word' and, especially, as of old, if it be written in strange characters, still awes us and controls us by its appeal to the old folk soul which is the deepest soul in us all."¹¹

These ideas are by no means accepted by all educational authorities. Some point out that many children show interest in books before their eighth or ninth years; that reading is social as well as individualistic, for it teaches children how others think and feel and live; that since the majority of children leave school at the sixth grade, they will go out into life even more poorly equipped than at present, if reading be postponed. Such considerations, both pro and con, are of great importance to the librarian who would direct the reading of young children.

¹¹ *The psychology and pedagogy of reading*, 4 (1908).

Not only has the opinion of educators regarding the value of reading for children undergone a change; their attitude, as well as that of sociologists and philosophers, toward books themselves has been undergoing changes even more profound. To be sure, leisure class standards persist—notwithstanding the progress which has been made in the direction of democracy—and determine our conventional attitude toward clothes, conduct, and education. The words “culture” and “liberal education” still convey to many minds the idea of mere bookishness and learning for ornamental purposes. The assumption that knowledge is not cultural when it is practical, has always been apparent in the utterances of the disciples of the printed page.

The root of liberal is *liber*, “free,” and not *liber*, “book.” A liberal education is one which liberates, sets free the mind. Many get much pleasure, too, out of reading for information, and perhaps more culture than in making their way through five feet of selected masterpieces. We can no longer believe that the reading of literature for recreation and the use of books for information can be divided into cultural and non-cultural processes. We now know that there cannot be any fast and hard line between liberal and practical education. Educators are not so certain as they were what culture is, still less certain that it comes from reading selected literature or that it may not also proceed from reading other kinds of books and doing other things than reading.

As to the cultural values in vocational education,

some of the leaders in the movement have expressed themselves as follows:¹²

Many of our present sticklers for culture would be too cultured to take the stand they do if they understood the original meaning. Originally culture was the ability to get the most selfish enjoyment out of leisure. . . . Vocational work is cultural . . . because it gives the pupils a purpose early in life. This purpose has an organizing, systematizing power over the mind, which makes for mental strength, discipline, culture. . . . The mind is clearest and most vigorous after periods of purposeful labor. Therefore pupils will grasp ideas from books and lectures and retain them with better mental appetite if they spend part of their time in vocational work. . . .

Mixing vocational and informational work creates a greater respect for each. Hence, the shop worker will feel that he must not throw books aside as not for him just because he has chosen a life work of manual labor.

Says another reformer:

As is well known the system of education under which we are working was planned primarily for European conditions, where class distinction is an essential element of social life. Our forefathers did not create a new system, but established one after European models. Their first thought, in higher education, was training for the ministry and later for public and official life. It was a training of the head and not of the hand—class education of doubtful value. . . . It is this system of education borrowed from bureaucratic Europe that is breaking up. . . . No democracy can long live and thrive whose children are fed continually on the ideas that tend to produce class distinctions. . . . The more commonly accepted definition of liberal education to-day is that given by Aristotle over two thousand years ago when slave and serf, mechanic and tradesmen were not considered part of

¹² Symposium on Harmonizing vocational and cultural education. National education association, Proceedings, 1914:377 et seq.

the educational system. . . . Every essential occupation and calling has both a practical and a cultural value. . . . These cannot be separated without injury to the character and efficiency of the individual. The hand, the head, and the heart of every individual need developing, and the education is more effective when the three processes are made mutually interactive. . . .

Evidently, according to another speaker in the same symposium, the lack of harmony between vocational and cultural education is chiefly in the minds of those who oppose vocational training. "Part of this lack of harmony in the views of the people," he continues, "naturally grows out of the fights between the men who work and the men for whom they work. Just as long as the laborer looks with suspicion upon . . . his employer, that long he will look with suspicion upon the educational notions of his employer. Just as long as the more favored class looks upon labor as menial or upon vocational training as inferior to other forms of mental attainment, that long there will be a lack of harmony between the teachers and friends of the vocational studies and the teachers and friends of the cultural studies."

Another speaker concludes that "there is only one way, then, in which these two elements can be harmonized and that is by having them both present. Every individual, therefore, should be sure to encounter a cultural element in his education in order that he may be united to his fellow-men by a common bond; likewise every individual should receive a practical education in order that he may find his place as a useful and contributing factor in . . . our

civilization." These opinions seem to represent the best thought of the modern educator as to cultural and vocational studies. Has the librarian, whose calling naturally inclines him to the side of the classical and cultural traditions seriously taken into account these newer elements in modern education and their bearing upon his profession?

When the common school system was established, discussions of the benefits of education had to do chiefly with the reading of literature and the study of text books. Glowing prophecies were made as to the results of exposing the common mind to such influences. Crime was to be eliminated, deep thinkers were to spring up on every hand, and every child was to have a chance to become a "gentleman"—a man of leisure—by means of book education. The child's morals, his knowledge of natural law, his power to think and to do, and his ability to escape manual work; all were to be gained from books. This sublime faith in book learning has been rudely shaken. Psychologists have demonstrated that the child learns less from reading than from play, from outdoor life, from the street, from his own crude experiments, and from work done with the hands; and that books are only accessories to those other factors in education. "Intellectual activity divorced from physical dealing with things loses half its strength and more than half its utility."¹⁸ What society needs is not well read people, who are not always interesting and useful even to themselves, but intelligent, thinking citizens, who

¹⁸ Walton, *Psychology of education*, 100 (1911).

know how to use their own brains as well as the thoughts of others. The bookish person may find it easy enough to get along without thinking; he may read instead.

In the study of science, books are of real value but only as secondary sources. Experimentation is necessary if the student is to learn to see with his own eyes the relation of cause and effect. Science demands thoroughness, accuracy, and careful thinking; it discourages the dilettantism of wide reading. According to Huxley, a rational scheme of education consists of teaching the "rules of the game"; in other words, giving to every child the fundamental truths of existence on this planet as a qualification for effective citizenship. The child learns these truths not so much by reading about them as by seeing and feeling the forces of nature at work. From his almost daily falls and bumps, he learns that bodies tend to fall to the ground, that two bodies cannot occupy the same place at the same time, and that he suffers whenever he attempts to act contrary to what he comes to recognize as natural law. All this we have tried to teach children from books, only to abandon the attempt. The laboratory method is now universal in the curricula of the higher grades, and will be more and more used throughout the school.

To the educator of the old school, the scientific spirit in modern education seems not cultural but materialistic and cold blooded. Yet insistence on truth for its own sake has definite moral results. Dr. Benjamin E. Smith, late managing editor of the

new Century dictionary, once remarked. "I know I told the truth as a child purely to please my mother, as I would have carried out any other course of action upon which she insisted. But I never saw any other reason for doing it until as a lad I worked in a chemical laboratory. Then I realized that nothing that was said made any difference to the elemental fact, and I believe I have loathed exaggeration and falsehood ever since."

The use of books as adjuncts to scientific investigation may be as truly liberalizing as recreational reading. The inventor, the machinist, the physician, or the chemist, may be getting more inspiration from working with those universal laws that the poets write about than the man who reads the poetry. Only recently have these discoveries been made and applied by modern educators. A prominent feature of religious teaching has been the exaltation of the spiritual and the degradation of the material. This sentiment stamped itself upon all early education, so that any dealing with material things was left to menials, and the education of the upper classes—who were the only ones to get any—was concerned with abstractions, which naturally had to be studied from books. "It was more poetical," remarks Miss Stearns in her *School without books*, "to think of the forests and streams as peopled with dryads and satyrs and the very animals as inhabited by the gods, than to make a scientific study of them." And it might be added that to most people a class in English poetry acquires

culture, whereas a class in biology gets only information.

In the early days of "universal" education, the influence of leisure class ideals was so strong as to create the impression that schooling afforded a means of escape from manual work. It was admitted, to be sure, that not all pupils could thereby find a way out of what was considered degrading employment and into the genteel occupations. But the school curriculum was arranged for the benefit of those who would not need to work with their hands; those who would become "gentlemen."

As democracy has reconstructed our ideas of gentility, so is industry reconstructing our ideas of workmanship. A workmanlike attitude toward a job—that which gives the artist his pleasure in creative effort—is found in all of us. Every normal person hates futility. This implies that everybody, rich or poor, has inherent qualities which may be developed to fit him for some particular service.

Modern economic conditions make it important, for the sake of the individual as well as society, that these natural aptitudes be recognized. In a system of education depending entirely upon the use of books, the peculiar ability of a child may never be discovered; and if discovered, may be regarded as a sign of freakishness or backwardness. Yet society to-day is in need of workers who have been trained in the primary manual arts which underlie the more complex performances of modern industry. Every child should

have this training whether he be a prospective wage earner or not. We must revive the craft spirit of the medieval guilds and make it a part of the preparation of those whom the schools train for life. Not only for the manual laborer is the training of the hand important, but also for every child who would be well rounded and liberally educated. "The value of vocational education," says an industrial expert,¹⁴ "as a means of enriching the life of the individual and of the community by developing pleasure in good workmanship, originality, critical judgment, and respect for one's self and one's occupation cannot possibly be overestimated." We are beginning to realize that instead of saying, "The cultural studies will benefit those who do not go to college, for every one should know these things," we should say, "The manual and vocational studies will be of cultural value even to the prospective college student, for every one should know how to do something with his hands."

To this the classicist may reply that he believes in an education which cultivates mind and spirit, usually meaning by this the study of literary masterpieces. Only in the aged, can books be the sole means of cultivating mind and spirit. For the young they are the least important; they may even hinder the ability to think and to do. Since the biologist tells us that one of the most important factors in the evolution of human mentality has been the use of the hand, it is impossible to believe that manual skill is no longer necessary

¹⁴ Sumner, Vocational education. National education association, Proceedings, 1914: 576.

to the application of the evolutionary process which we call education. For the child not only learns to do by doing; he also learns to think by doing. As he gains a sense of a universe in which all is truth by his experience and experiments, so he acquires from doing an honest piece of work, a kind of moral and intellectual integrity. Because the spiritual influences of manual work done for its own sake are intangible, it does not follow that they are also vague. In fact, the child who cheats himself and his job while making a bench may feel immediately the results of his dishonest work; the bench is likely to break down. In a high sense he learns the expediency of honesty, just as the race has acquired its moral standards.

This point of view is well stated in a recent report of the United States commissioner of education:

The problem of curriculum at the present time is often stated as the question of "practical or cultural." Theoretically, of course, all subjects are, or ought to be, both vocational and cultural. Every subject, however remotely connected with real life, is expected to help the pupil in his future, or it would not be in the curriculum. It is really not a question of excluding certain subjects because they are not vocational and adding others because they are; it is really the problem of emphasis—of using those subjects which will provide the greatest benefit to the individual combined with the greatest usefulness to society. It is not that educators fail to appreciate the "practical" as well as the cultural values of Latin, but they feel that there are other subjects more immediately necessary for the public welfare that are not only practical, but "cultural" in the best sense. In this connection it is felt by many critics of public education that what is needed is emphasis upon the "cultural"

value of the so-called practical subjects. The merely book taught boy has much to learn, from a purely cultural standpoint, of the boy who knows how to use his hands. What manual training was intended to do, and did not, something in the modern school must sooner or later accomplish—achieve genuine sentiment in behalf of all labor whether of head or hands.¹⁵

Under the conditions of a bookish education, the “brightest” children are those who on account of their retentive memories succeed in keeping up with their grades and passing examinations. Since memory is only an animal trait, useful if it does not take the place of thinking, the school which cultivates this faculty in children may be neglecting other forms of mental discipline more essential to their all round development. Here again, education has been organized for the minority, since few are “bright” according to the requirements of book learning.

In most states the child can leave school as soon as he becomes fourteen, whatever his grade. If he be a retarded pupil, whose dullness is sufficiently marked, he may be sent to an ungraded school where bodily activity is the principal element in the “lessons.” Under such conditions, the hopeless child of the desk and book often becomes an interested and tireless worker, when he begins to do what all children like to do. As soon as he finds that books can show him how to make things, his dislike of them is likely to be modified. From the educational point of view retarded children are variously classed as backward, delinquent, deficient or subnormal. As soon

¹⁵ 1912: I, 10.

as they go to work, however, such children often develop technical skill and ability and so confound their teachers, who have set them down as dull and unpromising students of books. Of the young wage earners, subnormal and normal alike enter the ranks of unskilled labor, because their training has prepared them for nothing else. The "bright," bookish child is at as great a disadvantage as the dullard, unless he is going to college, and only one in ten goes even through high school. He, too, is likely to become an unskilled laborer, because his education has not developed the faculties need in modern life.

Under these circumstances, the schools must turn their attention to an analysis of each child's needs, with a view to fitting the curriculum to the child instead of trying to fit the child to the curriculum. Thus the determination of children's aptitudes becomes the important business of education. By means of various psychological tests it has been found that there are many children whose mental growth has stopped at an early age while their bodies have continued to grow. One may have the mind of a twelve year old child and yet be held responsible for the conduct and work of a youth of eighteen. When the brains of such children begin to stiffen it becomes imperative, we are told, that "they should at once turn their backs alike on the cultural subjects and the three R's, and put in the short and precious time that remains on training that will enable them to earn their own living."¹⁸

¹⁸ Brewster, A scientific study of fools. McClure's, 39: 332 (1912).

From the earliest times literature has been a factor in the education of children among every civilized people. It was a religious duty with the Jews to teach children to read the literature which embodied their ideals and traditions. With the Greeks it was a patriotic duty to subject the youth of the privileged classes to the influences of the arts as a preparation for citizenship. It was thought that only by this method could racial principles and conventions be continued through the generations.

These old educational ideas were different from our own, although vestiges of them still cling to our school system. Whenever they have been carried to excess, education has come to place emphasis upon memory and imitation rather than upon the development of power to form independent judgments. China has long furnished an example of the nation where the literature of the fathers has stood in the way of progress. Unfortunately there are Chinese-minded educators in this country who would attach Oriental sacredness to anything written or printed. To many of these persons the thoughts of the old writers have a kind of sentimental appeal which makes it seem important that they should be inculcated by means of books. In short, the old educational ideal was to make children think as their fathers thought.

What Dr. Charles W. Eliot has said in his recent pamphlet¹⁷ on secondary education applies to education in general. If such views are widely accepted,

¹⁷ Changes needed in American secondary education. 29 p. (1916).

it will mean that books will be used and thought of in quite a different way.

The best part of all human knowledge has come by exact and studied observation made through the senses—of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. The most important part of education has always been the training of the senses. . . . The European guilds with their elaborate rules about apprenticeship contributed strongly for centuries to the education of the people through trades, before public schools and education for the masses through books and reading had been thought of. . . .

It follows from these considerations that the training of the senses should always have been a prime object in human education at every stage from the primary to professional. That prime object it has never been and is not to-day. The kind of education the modern world has inherited from ancient times was based chiefly on literature. . . .

Since the middle of the eighteenth century a new element in the education of the white race has been developing, slowly for a hundred years but rapidly during the past fifty. This new element is physical, chemical, and biological science. . . . Through the radical work of great inventors and discoverers and of these new professions, all the large industries and transportation methods of the world, and therefore the commerce of the world, have been so changed that the producers and traders of times preceding 1850 would find, . . . that the processes by which they made their livings or their fortunes had completely disappeared. . . .

The observational, manual, and scientific subjects often awakened in a boy or young man for the first time an intellectual interest and zeal in work which memory studies have never stirred. Hand and eye work often develops a power of concentrated attention which book work has failed to produce, but which can be transferred to book work when once created. . . . The progressive sense training from beginning to end of systematic education is desirable for all pupils,

whatever their destination in life. . . . To use a good tool or machine, and get the results it is competent to produce when in skilled hands, is vastly more interesting than reading or hearing about the uses of such a tool or machine. . . . The men, who, since the nineteenth century began, have done most for the human race through the right use of their reasons, imaginations, and wills, are the men of science, the artists, and the skilled craftsmen, not the metaphysicians, the historians or the rulers. . . . As to the real poets, teachers of religion, and other men of genius, their best work has the scientific quality of precision and truthfulness; and their rhetorical or oratorical work is only their second best.

Books, however, will have a place even in a revised scheme of education, such as Doctor Eliot and other reformers contemplate, but it may be quite different from their present position and from the ideas of educators and librarians as to what their functions should be.

Children are members of society and prospective citizens, whether prospective wage earners or not. They are expected to become familiar with the spiritual as well as the mental and physical environment into which each individual is born. The experience of the race, which it has taken ages to assimilate, they must somehow get in a few years. Some of this vicarious experience they will get from books, although probably less than is sometimes claimed. However, the need of information as to cause and effect exists for children in the moral world as in the world of physical science. Biography, history, and fiction help them to know the ideals of civilization, without being told in so many words, and to become conscious of what civilized men take

for granted. Such literature serves as a background for individual thoughts and conclusions.

In the early years children may get some of this foundation from the myths, folk tales, and fables which represent the growing moral consciousness of the race. Because they show such keen appreciation and understanding of this form of literature, over-enthusiastic claims as to its moral influences have been made. Not only has folk literature been designated as an important factor in education, but familiarity with literature as literature has been proposed as a means of developing moral and spiritual qualities in children. The truth seems to be that, as Spencer said, "Men dress their children's minds as they do their bodies in the prevailing fashion." Part of the equipment of an educated person, so-called, consists of familiarity with certain prescribed masterpieces. In order to make sure that children like what we think they ought to like, we force upon them our own ready-made opinions about the books which every man who would call himself educated should read. Just as the pagan of earlier times was the man from the country whose appearance was uncouth, so the literary pagan is one with wrong opinions or none at all about certain literature. Naturally we do not want our children to be humiliated by appearing "different," but we must have a better reason for asking them to study our literary choices. Consequently, we have decided that good literature has intrinsic social and moral values. The moral influences proceed from the ideals of individuals and the race as found in books

and from the appeal to the emotions. An intelligent cultivated sympathy and imagination should also serve a social purpose by leading logically toward brotherhood and social morality. Unfortunately the road to morality is not so easy; and when we try to prove the social and moral influences of books, facts will not support us. It needs only slight observation to convince an open minded person that an appreciation of literature is no evidence of an appreciation of moral values. We no longer consider the reader of books either liberally educated or necessarily well equipped for the responsibilities of citizenship. If familiarity with literature were really evidence of superior moral force, then Boston, New York, and London should be centers of sweetness and light—model cities radiating ethical strength and wholesomeness. We have been misled by the fact that great men in most of the professions report an imposing list of masterpieces which they read as very young boys. They do not say that these books were all they read, and neither they nor any one else can say what it is that makes a man a genius. It would seem that no one could be fatuous enough to believe that by giving boys the books read by Lincoln or Edward Everett Hale as boys we can produce in them the Lincoln and Hale types of character. Great men are not developed in that way.

As for the social effectiveness of good books, this claim appears even more far-fetched. To be sure, the reverse has been found true to some extent; that is, poor, weak, and vicious books may be degenerative in their effect, and mediocre writing weakening to

the mind. But poor literature is only one of many factors in a poor environment. One may assert with some positiveness that the majority of respectable and useful citizens read when boys as much of the "Dare Devil Dick" variety of fiction as was available. On the other hand, social workers say that the frequenters of the cheap lodging houses are likely to be familiar with good books. A vagrant who was picked up in a large western city was found to have a well worn copy of Plato in his pocket. Such instances are common to those familiar with the habits of dependents and delinquents. It is significant that in deciding what is good literature, the literary minded person is inclined to look leniently upon a vicious book if only the thought be clothed in beautiful language, because he is interested in it as a work of art and not as a moral influence.

Books are probably among the secondary moral influences, perhaps far down on the list. Children learn truth, industry, generosity, courage, and the other virtues, not from reading about them but by practicing them. In teaching ethics as in teaching science, there is a growing tendency to use the laboratory method. Such movements as those which resulted in the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire girls are primarily educational and would have been unnecessary if our education had been less bookish. Could the children who are in this way learning the fundamentals of social morality get them from a selected list of good literature? Like the rest of the race, young people must learn ethics by doing ethically. There is no short cut. The family

continues to be the best because it is the natural training school for the virtues. Since all families are not satisfactory in this respect, we find it is necessary to supplement them by institutions.¹⁸ We cannot, however, improve upon association, example, and practice as the methods in teaching morals. The literature which illustrates the virtues may reinforce these other lessons; it can never do more.

But literature is judged as an art; and why try to give excuses for allowing children to come under its influences? To be sure, literary masterpieces, like much of painting and music, will continue to be unappreciated by many of our most desirable citizens. Artistic appreciation usually requires cultivated taste, and only the privileged class can have leisure for the full development of the trained eye and ear. Nevertheless, educators have assumed that a cultivated taste is an essential part of every child's equipment. Literature, being easier to present than the other arts, is taught in school, and a good deal of it the children appear to enjoy. Pleasure derived from reading is often the standard by which to measure the spiritual results, the descriptions of which are interesting rather than convincing. The fact that children find enjoyment in what adults have decided is good literature does not necessarily prove that they receive any benefits from reading it. As Stevenson remarked, "Eloquence and thought, character and conversation, were but obstacles to brush aside as we dug blithely after a certain sort of incident like a pig for truffles." A

¹⁸ Bosanquet, *The strength of the people*, 211-28 (1903).

later writer has made a similiar observation, "With the young, at least, the most enthusiastic reading is often the most slovenly, the engrossment with the mere tale begetting an indifference little short of philistine to every appeal, even from beauty itself, which presents itself in the form of a delay."¹⁹

It is unnecessary as well as futile to make extravagant claims as to the benefits to be derived from the reading of literature. If the education in the refinements and graces of living be kept in due proportion to the education for self preservation, for earning a living, for parenthood, and for citizenship, we shall have achieved Spencer's ideal of a well balanced scheme. If good literature presents the personalities and incidents demanded by simple minds in beautiful form accompanied by lofty ideals, the emotion to be aroused may reach the heart of the reader. Every opportunity should be given for it to do so, provided it does not interfere with other and more important performances of childhood.

¹⁹ Firkins, Teaching of literature. Education 28: 316 (1908).

CHAPTER TWO

EARLY LIBRARIES FOR CHILDREN

At the time when the literature of instruction and information for children, thinly disguised as fiction, was being produced in England with great enthusiasm by the followers of Rousseau, societies and associations began to interest themselves in supplying with free reading matter those poor children who could not profit otherwise from books in which the proper sentiments for every class of society were carefully defined. Robert Raikes was moved by the miserable and abandoned condition of the children whom he saw in the streets of London on Sunday to found his Sunday school. There he taught reading, and finding no books suited to his pupils, he wrote one himself. Since there were no compulsory education laws either in England or America, there were young apprentices in both countries whose schooling ended at an early age or never began. To provide these young workers with the means of self improvement, mechanics' institutes and apprentices' libraries were established.

As early as 1797 there was an Artisans' library in Birmingham, England, which could be used upon payment of a penny a week. This movement, the first successful attempt to supply children with free or nominally free reading, spread rapidly, and soon there

were many mechanics' institutes in England and the United States, each with its library, reading room, museum, and lecture courses. The result in this country, as set forth by an enthusiastic English writer, was "that thousands of children not more than eight or ten years old now know more of geology, minerals . . . than was probably known thirty years ago by any five individuals in the United States."¹

In 1817 the Society for promoting the education of the poor in Ireland instructed its assistant commissioner to inquire into the reading of the young and to determine what mechanics' libraries there were, and also "whether any systematic measures are taken for placing suitable books in the hands of those persons who have been taught to read." This was a step in advance; for there was concern not only that children should learn to read, but also that they should be taught what to read.

In the life of the American colonies, the "social library" seems to have been the only collection of books open to young people in the small towns. One of these libraries, founded in 1795, was so small and so desperately needed, that the members drew lots for first choice. Options on the books were let to the highest bidder, but the amount of the bids was generally as small as eight or ten cents "even for the last of the Waverly series." Meetings were held on the first Sunday evening of each month, and discussion was

¹ Wyse, *On the lyceum system in America*. Central education society, *Papers*, II, 203-28 (1838); Baker, *Mechanics' institutes and libraries*. *Ibid.*, I, 214-55 (1837).

² Annual report, 9.

almost always of books. In the year 1803, Caleb Bingham of Salisbury, Connecticut, because he had felt the lack of reading as a boy, left a library for children between nine and sixteen years of age. The following year, Dr. Jesse Torrey started the New Lebanon (N. Y.) society for the acquisition of useful knowledge, which was open to the youth of both sexes between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. The useful knowledge was to come entirely from books to be donated or bought with the small subscriptions. Many were admitted, however, who could contribute nothing. Dr. Torrey was one of the earliest advocates of libraries in schools, and his writings helped to influence the establishment of libraries in the schools of Philadelphia and in his own state. He has been given credit also for the idea later realized in the apprentices' libraries.⁴

The apprentices' library of Philadelphia was founded in 1820. By 1876 it had 21,000 volumes and was serving 2000 boys and girls. In Cincinnati the apprentices' library was composed of books which individuals chose to donate and such other books as were calculated to make "the minor content with his station in life."⁵ The Brooklyn institute began in 1823 as the Youth's free library, conducted by the Apprentices' library association. Boys over twelve were allowed to use the books, and girls were admitted for an hour one afternoon a week.

³ See Porter, *Books and reading* (1871).

⁴ Torrey, *The intellectual torch*, 1817, reprinted 1912, xvi.

⁵ U. S. bureau of education, *Special report on libraries*, pt. 1:900 (1876).

A plan for printing and publishing books suitable for young people is outlined in the prospectus of the American society for the diffusion of useful knowledge, issued in 1837. The books were to be placed in schools, and through the pupils it was planned to reach parents also. Such an organization, continues the prospectus, "will raise the tone of literary interest and ambition among pupils, and relieve the dull routine of mere elementary instruction, by the pleasures of entertaining and useful knowledge. It will be a kind of connecting link, to unite the school with society around. . . ."⁶

The Sunday school, with its train of religious literature, was already making its influence felt by the time the first apprentices' libraries were well established. The Religious tract society of London was publishing children's books in 1810, and by 1827 the American Sunday school union had issued 50,000 books and tracts. Sunday school libraries, which were started in order to attract poor children to Sunday school, remained for many years the principal free dispensaries of books for children. Hannah More set the standard for the dreary books they contained, and she was imitated by a number of American women of feeble genius and facile pen. These books reflected the extreme religious fervor of the first half of the last century, and they cannot be considered as the product of any one denomination or organization. If it is better for children to have poor but harmless

⁶ American society for the diffusion of useful knowledge, Prospectus of the American library for schools and families, 6 (1837).

reading matter rather than none at all, then these libraries had their place.⁷ One Sunday school society made a speciality of distributing books among the children of remote country districts. As traveling libraries were unheard of, no doubt this society through its missionaries brought many children in touch with the only reading matter they ever saw.

When the books of Maria Edgeworth, with their basis of French materialism, were introduced into America, they found a place in most Sunday school libraries. The stories were at least human and natural, and sufficiently moral for the most exacting taste. They did not entirely supplant the religious books, but they influenced their content. It was not long before the religious writers had acquired some of the Edgeworth characteristics, usually copying, as is the habit of imitators, the faults rather than the virtues of the more gifted writer. As a result we have the curious spectacle of the "goddess of reason" influencing the literature of the orthodox Protestant denominations. Thus there came into existence children's stories which exhibited both religious utilitarianism and French materialism. In these curious books, religious instruction was intermingled with practical information, mostly inaccurate, and the predominant

⁷ Little that is favorable can be said of the contents of most of these early libraries, but attractive books written especially for children were being extensively published and sold. Descriptions of these early children's books are to be found in the following: Baker, *Children's literature*. Munroe's *cyclopedia of education*, 4: 42-6; Earle, *Child life in colonial days*. Religious books, story and picture books, 248-304; Halsey, *Forgotten books of the American nursery*; Kodjbanoff, *The history of children's books*, Manuscript thesis, University of Chicago, Department of education (1911); Welsh, *On some of the books for children of the last century*, with a few words on the philanthropic publisher of St. Paul's churchyard.

motive became "Be good and you will get rich" instead of "Be good or you will be lost." From such literature, the children of the time got their enjoyment and inspiration.

Notwithstanding frequent protests against the quality of reading furnished by the Sunday school libraries, no effective action was taken until the ladies' commission of the Unitarian Congregationalists issued, about 1865, a catalogue of selected juvenile literature. The compilers' standards were high, but when in 1886 they revised their first catalogue, they confessed that they "were often surprised to find that our taste as well as the children's had changed." They pointed out the danger from the floods of literature put out by publishing houses with religious names and secular business methods, because of the "intellectual imbecility" likely to result from the reading of the typical Sunday school books. It is doubtful whether in the nature of things this good work could have accomplished general reform. In any event, the standards of the Sunday school library are still low. Books are often ordered not from reviews, but from advertisements of religious societies, and publishers, with little attempt at careful selection; for Sunday schools have not made use of the principles of scientific book selection, nor have they generally sought the advice

* Brooks, The ladies' commission. *Christian Register*, 70: 84 (1891).

* An interesting example of a Sunday school library which covers a wide range of subject matter is that of the South Congregational church of New London, Conn. The arrangement of the catalogue is inconsistent and irrational from a library point of view, but the book selection is of unusual excellence.

of those having expert knowledge either of children or of books.*

Fortunately, the Sunday school library was not the only collection of books open to children. In the report of the Public school society of New York for 1818 school libraries are mentioned as one of the innovations of the year. Fifty books were supplied to each of the schools maintained by the society, for the use of the best behaved pupils. This was a private charitable enterprise, and the books were generally donations; often those volumes which were of no interest to the donors and consequently of little value to the children.

It was not until 1827 that the state of New York began to interest itself in supplying the rural districts with books. In that year Governor De Witt Clinton urged the placing of small collections of books in every school house. These libraries were intended more for the use of adults than for children, it is true, but they were called school libraries, and a law passed in 1835 placed them on the same basis of taxation as the public schools.¹⁰ Private individuals and societies had succeeded in keeping the subject of school libraries alive from Governor Clinton's time until this law was passed.¹¹

Early school books were quite as objectionable as

¹⁰ This was the first law of its kind in the United States, and "when the thought had penetrated the public mind that the school district library deserved economic support by taxation on the same principle as the public schools, a very important chapter of American institutional history had begun."—Adams, *Public libraries and popular education*, 96 (1900).

¹¹ See chapter three.

the Sunday school books. Horace Mann included in his program of educational reform the improvement of school readers, which were little more than scrap books. He also pointed out the necessity for school libraries which would give children opportunity to read good books and so divert their interest from those of questionable value. Through his efforts the legislature of Massachusetts was induced to pass an act in 1837 authorizing school districts to raise money by taxation for the maintenance of school libraries. As this law failed to produce the desired result, another act was passed in 1842 establishing the library bounty system, by the terms of which the state offered to give fifteen dollars to every school district which would appropriate a like sum for a library.

From this time on educators became more and more interested in the subject of reading matter for children. Almost all the new states in the West recognized the school library either in their constitutions, as Wisconsin did, or by statute. Although the result of the school district library in New York was negative, the germ of a good idea was there ready to be revived and developed later. The public libraries for the most part were still excluding children by an arbitrary age limit, and the schools, in spite of small funds, made heroic efforts to counteract the evils of the "dime novel" and unregulated reading by young people. In the report of the United States commissioner of education for 1887-8 are many letters from state superintendents emphasizing the necessity for school libraries as a means of broadening the scope

of lessons and furnishing recreational reading. By 1889 reading circles for young people had been established in Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio in connection with the state teachers' associations. An advisory board, which conducted the teachers' reading circles, selected the books for the children, and they were sold at cost to individuals or schools who joined the circle. Children who read a certain number of the selected books automatically became members of the circle.

The school authorities everywhere shared in the general uneasiness over the great amount of vile literature designed especially for children. The famous boy criminal, Jesse Pomeroy, had mentioned some of the literature he had read, and there were many thoughtful persons who felt that other juvenile malefactors were being developed by the same sort of books. In 1887 a New York newspaper reporter found in Park Row a circulating library for boys, composed of about 100,000 paper covered books, mostly uncopyrighted material. A boy paid three cents for one volume, and if the book was returned in good condition, he could sell it back to the proprietor for two cents and get another. Such discoveries aroused much agitation and helped to stimulate the demand for children's libraries.

Miss Emily S. Hanaway of New York helped to organize a Children's library society in 1886, the constitution of which stated that "its object shall be to create and foster among children too young to be admitted to the public libraries a taste for wholesome reading. To this end it will secure the delivery of

addresses, the publication of articles, the circulation of printed matter, the co-operation of schools, teachers, and parents, and chiefly, so far as its means will allow, it will supply the children for use both at home and in free libraries with the books and serials best adapted to profit them and to prepare them for the wisest use of the free libraries."¹² Rooms were hired and equipped with books, a stereopticon, and games. In spite of an encouraging beginning and the crowded condition of the room, the experiment was not a success. Quarters were shifted several times in the two years of the society's existence. For a few months the second floor of the George Bruce library was occupied, but adults complained of the noise, and again the library was forced to find new quarters. At about the same time an entirely separate library for children was opened on Fifth street as a branch of the Aguilar free library. It finally became the children's room of the Tompkins Square branch of the New York public library.

The American library association does not appear formally to have considered the subject of reading for children until 1882, when Miss Caroline M. Hewins presented a report upon children's work. Miss Hewins had sent cards to twenty-five leading libraries asking, "What are you doing to encourage a love of reading in boys and girls?" The replies were not encouraging. In 1885 Miss Hannah P. James presented another report on children's reading, which was the result of a questionnaire sent to public libraries with over 4,000

¹² *Library Journal*, 12: 185-6 (1887).

volumes. In this case many of the libraries did not answer the questions at all. Miss James and Miss Hewins, who were among the pioneers in this branch of library work, carried on the work in their own libraries and never lost confidence in the ultimate success of their efforts to interest others in the profession.

Although they were barred out of the majority of library buildings on account of age, school children were being reached by several libraries. In Worcester, Springfield (Mass.), Providence, Pawtucket, and Cleveland, the libraries supplied books to teachers especially for the use of pupils, or sent the collections directly to the class rooms. The libraries of Denver, Ilion (N. Y.), St. Louis, Richmond (Ind.), Pawtucket, Hartford and Greeley (Col.), have had no age limit for years. Children received cards as soon as they could read and were allowed to take books before there were any separate children's rooms.

In 1890 the public library of Brookline opened a reading room for children; and in 1893 the Minneapolis public library provided a corridor for the children so that they might be kept away from the adults, whom they annoyed. As early as 1894 the public library of Watertown (Mass.) had a separate reading room for children. The Denver public library seems to have had the first "children's room" in the sense in which the term is now used; that is, a reading room from which books were loaned for home use. This room, which was equipped with low shelves and seats, had three thousand books accessible to children at a

time when free access to shelves was still uncommon.

These early rooms had no children's librarians, although the public library of St. Louis in 1894 engaged an experienced teacher to undertake the supervision of children's reading.

After the age limit had been lowered or abolished, the principle of furnishing reading matter especially adapted to children—a principle already well established in the schools, made rapid headway in public libraries; and of late years a children's room has come to be considered a necessary part of a modern library. Children's libraries are now considered also an essential part of any social center plan, as in the social centers in Denver, and in the famous field houses in Chicago.

Although the American librarian is likely to think that there is no "children's work" in the American sense carried on in English libraries, the fact is that the needs of the children were being considered in England soon after the middle of the nineteenth century.¹² During the cotton famine resulting from the American civil war, a juvenile readers' department was opened in Manchester, and over 7,000 books were issued the first year. At Birkenhead, 743 books were given to children for home use in 1865, and five years later over 2,500 books were issued. A library for children was established at Nottingham in 1862 as the result of a bequest. By 1898, there were 106 public

¹² Private grammar school libraries were common in England during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but as they consisted mainly of Latin books and sermons, they are interesting only to the bibliophile.

libraries in England and Wales, which had separate collections for children.

Library cooperation with schools began in England at about the same time as in America, but it has been hampered by the absence of a common school system. Many of the free schools are charitable institutions, conducted by private individuals or religious societies. The "ragged schools" of London had 17,000 volumes in 1871. The books were issued for home use, to boys and girls who had been at school six weeks. At the same time there was a lending library in connection with the Jews' school in Bell Lane.

Leeds seems to have been the first city in which the schools and the free library were in active co-operation before 1877. The library tax rate in England has been so inadequate that the schools have usually furnished money for quarters, books, and equipment, while the library furnishes service. The library has been an important part of the attractions of the large boys' clubs, which correspond somewhat to our social settlements. There are also in England two organizations similar to the reading circles of Indiana. They are the Victoria reading circle of the Sunday school union, which conducts reading clubs in connection with the Sunday school, and the National home reading union, which does the same work through the board schools of London and has over 500 circles.

At Cardiff the school children get all their reading from the school libraries, which are selected, prepared, and kept in condition by the library. Books are bought

through an appropriation from the school fund. The school children are allowed to get books from the public library only in special instances, through a permit from the teacher. When they leave school they are given a recommendation from the teacher to the librarian. This plan is worthy of careful study, because it keeps the reading under the control of the person who is responsible for results, and it relieves the library of the expense of a large children's room and the congestion which results when crowds of school children use it for limited periods of time.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL LIBRARY

The methods of teaching children to read have been as numerous as the ideas of what they should read after they have learned. That all should learn at about the same age or be set down as dunces, has been taken for granted until recently. "Learn your letters, mind your betters;" this was the short and pointed advice to youth. Learning the alphabet was the first step in a laborious and difficult task, and those who lagged behind were spurred on by punishment of varying degrees of severity. There was no ultimate pleasure or profit to be gained from the effort so far as the child could see; simply one unpleasant lesson after another.

So much we may infer from a study of some of the earliest reading books for children, such as Lydgate's *Puer de Mensam* (1430), *The Babe's Book* (1475), and *The Book of Curtase* (1430-40), which cannot be said to have made reading a pleasure. The *Orbis Pictus* of Comenius (1650) which emphasized the pictorial features of the reading book, was better liked by the children, as is evident from the number of editions and the well worn condition of the few copies that have been preserved.

John Locke urged that reading should be made a

pleasure, saying, "I have always had a Fancy that Learning might be made a Play and a Recreation to Children. . . . When by these gentle Ways he desires to read, some easy, pleasant Books suited to his Capacity should be put into his Hands, wherein the Entertainment he finds might draw him on. . . . But his Learning to read should be made as little Trouble or Business to him as might be."¹ When applied by his contemporaries to the teaching of reading, this theory resulted in some novel experiments. Thus cakes were made in the shape of the letters of the alphabet, and the child was bidden to name the letter before he might eat. Little girls, with painful prickings of the fingers, learned to sew and to read at the same time by making samplers. Locke advised the use of the alphabet blocks, that the child might learn while he played. "The Letters pasted upon the Sides of the Dice or Polygon were best to be the Size of the Folio Bible to begin with and none of them Capital Letters."

While the publication of the "toy books" may be attributed to the teachings of Locke, those who designed the early English school books were influenced rather by the church primary manuals and by the arrangement of the horn book. The horn book was not a book, but a sheet of paper containing the letters of the alphabet, mounted on wood and protected by a film of transparent horn. The piece of wood had a handle and was often suspended from the

¹ Locke, *Some thoughts on education*, 129, 133, 134 (1880).

² *Ibid.*, 132.

child's neck or waist. Besides a large cross at the top of the sheet and the large and small letters of the alphabet, it contained the vowels, their combinations with the consonants, and finally the formula, "In the name of the Father, and of the Sonne and of the Holy Ghost," the Lord's Prayer, and the Roman numerals in the order named. Some astute publisher soon saw the advantage of combining the church primers, which were considered essential to the education of every child, with the A B C books.

Harris, the publisher of the earliest of these combination books, had to flee to New England on account of the anti-Popish character of the religious part of his book. In the new country he found the anti-Popishness of his Protestant Tutor welcome. When the New England primer was published it was found necessary to reduce the size in order to make the price more suitable to the Puritan pocket. The cross was omitted because of the Puritan aversion to that symbol. In all other respects the New England primer followed the plan of the Protestant Tutor and the other primers, which in their turn had followed the horn book and the church prayer book. It is said that the first of these books was a Protestant primer suggested by Henry VIII.

Each edition of the New England primer reflected the changing beliefs and interests of the times. The religious severity of the earliest editions was soon modified by the introduction of some of the poems of Dr. Watts and later by moral precepts. The historical tale was the forerunner of the patriotic selec-

tions, which became prominent in the school books about the time of the Revolution, and the literary "gem" finally crowded out most of the religious material and much of the A B C section. So closely did the school books of the time copy this primer that all school books for at least a century may be said to be modifications of it.

The letters and state papers of our early statesmen indicate that there was good reason for emphasis upon correct spelling; and long lists of words to be spelled became an important part of all school readers. The Webster speller (1783) which represented the demand for that sort of instruction, influenced the readers which followed. For many years school reading was regarded chiefly as a means of teaching spelling correctly. The growing incoherence of the reading books, which had come to reflect various educational hobbies, was condemned by Horace Mann as a serious hindrance to the development of effective reading power in children. The result of his protests, however, was to change their content rather than their form.

Publishers continued to experiment and educators continued to complain of the lack of unity characteristic of the readers, and of the fact that they failed to lead children to good reading habits after school was completed. Although the school library as an important antidote to school readers had already been proposed, local niggardliness and indifference forced teachers and publishers to rely upon readers as the only means by which they could get (1) complete

literary selections, (2) supplementary reading, and (3) collateral reading in geography, history, and science.

As stated in Mr. P. A. Barnett's *Teaching and organization* (1897) the educator's conception of the school library was as large as the possibility of getting the books was small. The library should aid the routine work of the school; should encourage voluntary work; should stimulate the formation of individual tastes and pursuits; should acquaint pupils with social, political, and scientific facts; and should foster a love of reading and form a sound and healthy literary taste. These may be said to be the main functions of the school library to-day.

At an earlier time, text-books which fulfilled these requirements could be bought out of school funds when it was impossible to obtain other books to form a library. It is important to note that it was the excessive economy of parents and taxpayers and not the choice of teachers that so long compelled the use of the school reader instead of better books.

That literature itself might be used as a means of giving children the necessary incentive, by letting them read what they enjoy, had occurred to teachers as early as 1850.⁸ It was proposed that literature be presented to the children in such sequence that it would illustrate the evolution of the racial ideals. In this way books might be made to convey moral lessons, which should take the place of the earlier religious instruction. Some of these ideas were incorporated

⁸ See Mansfield, *American education* (1850).

in the curricula of the Cincinnati public schools about 1874 in the form of a systematic study of the American poets in the lower grades. The birthdays of authors were celebrated and the memory gem became the final word in literary training. This plan was noted and favorably discussed in the report of the education commission of the French government, which visited the schools of this country soon afterward.

In an address before the Ohio teachers' association in 1880, the use of literature in schools, and collateral reading in history were proposed. A few publishers were enterprising enough to issue books containing entertaining selections on history, geography, and science, which could be bought under the text book appropriation. These books served the purpose of the school library for the time being.

Literature instead of scraps was officially recognized as eminently desirable by the National education association about 1880. In that year Mr. J. H. Smart, superintendent of public instruction in Indiana, published a symposium on children's reading, adding corroborative comments based upon his own experience. A list of books included in this symposium contained chiefly so-called recreational reading, which was considered as distinct from reading for information. The selection was of a high order, possibly unduly so, since the compiler remarked that while she included Miss Alcott's *Little women*, that fact should not be taken as an indication that other books of the same author were approved.

The old way was to teach the child to read through the use of a collection of simple words made into sentences, which were supposed to represent his interests. Even after he had learned to recognize certain words when he saw them, he got little benefit from his reading. When he graduated to the higher readers, he was overwhelmed with miscellaneous information. For his first contact with real literature, he had to wait until he reached the high school. If he failed to enter the high school, his literary acquaintanceship was confined to memory gems and selections for declamation. The proceedings of the National education association record the attempts made from 1880 to 1900 to bring about a reform of these conditions. This does not mean that the reading problem as a pedagogical question is considered solved at the present time. If the librarian is to handle the reading of little children, she should probably be familiar with the various methods of teaching reading advocated by educational authorities and in use in the schools.⁴ The content of school readers and of school libraries is not necessarily affected, however, by the changes and experiments in methods of teaching reading.

Myths, legends, and folk-tales, the foundation for all literature, can be used for early reading lessons. Inasmuch as the child repeats in his experiences the

⁴ Some of the methods which have been tried and are still being used and the reasons for and against their use may be found in: Klap- per, *Teaching children to read*; Laing, *Reading*. Rev. ed.; Spaulding and Bryce, *Learning to read*; Hughes, *Teaching to read*; Huey, *The psychology and pedagogy of reading*; Arnold, *Reading*; Taylor, *Principles and methods of teaching reading*.

emotions and impulses that the race has transmitted through folk literature, he is already adapted to the old stories; they do not need to be adapted to him. In 1891, Mr. Frank Pattee, a school principal, made a plea for the use of unabridged poems of Longfellow, Whittier and Lowell, and suggested that readers be discarded. One result of the expression of such ideas on the part of teachers and school authorities was the Heart of Oak series of school readers, edited by Charles Eliot Norton and published in 1895. In these books the material was arranged according to grades and the folk literature was distributed among the books for the lower grades. The series naturally began with Mother Goose. These books set a standard for graded school readers which has seldom been equalled. For the higher grades, the Riverside Literature series begun in 1883, presents literary units, such as a single selection of prose or several poems by the same author in one number. These little paper bound booklets have rendered valuable service for while there is no attempt to grade the material presented, there is an effort to get (1) the best of its kind; (2) what will appeal to young people; and (3) generally a complete masterpiece instead of excerpts.

There were teachers, however, who did not wait for the publication of adequate text books to begin to reform reading conditions. To Mary E. Burt especially, the use of the adapted, expurgated classic and books written down to children seemed a grave educational error. Children's books were anathema to her, and she undertook to prove that real classics

could be read and enjoyed by children in the grades. One of Miss Burt's ideas was to present literature in chronological order, selecting from each era some representative masterpiece. The results of these experiments were presented in her *Literary landmarks* (1889), from which it appears that young children in her classes had read and apparently appreciated certain of the early Eastern religious writings, several of Aristophanes' plays, and some of Juvenal. The bibliography in this book, though poorly arranged, is suggestive and frequently surprising. It includes the editions which Miss Burt used with her classes, and it is notable for a complete absence of childrens' books. Whether all teachers or librarians could successfully present or use such a program is doubtful, but it is certain that many of the early classics if attractively bound and printed will be read voluntarily and with pleasure by young people. Miss Burt was not alone in her efforts to give worth while reading to children. Her plan was more ambitious than that of other teachers, but there were other pioneers who wished to improve the subject matter of the child's reading and to make lessons a pleasure instead of drudgery.

Educational reformers recognized that it was important not only to improve the quality and content of the school readers, but also to enrich the curriculum and broaden the child's horizon by giving him agreeable and informing reading matter on the subjects he studied. This aspect of the reform of the schools appealed especially to Mr. Charles Francis Adams, Junior, who at the time was a member of the

board of education of Quincy. Unlike many public spirited reformers, Mr. Adams knew how to put his ideas into workable shape. He felt the narrowness of the contemporary methods and with the aid of Mr. F. W. Parker, superintendent of schools, he outlined a plan for the collateral reading of the pupils. The teachers were urged to take the children to the public library, and not only to use the books available but to call for more.* Such efforts were only symptoms of the departure from the old scholastic methods into something that would connect with life and the natural interests of children. As a substitute for the school library, public library books served for the time, especially when their use was directed by the teachers. Other schools which were fortunate enough to be situated near a good public library had used their books, as in Gloversville, New York, topics to be looked up in the library being assigned weekly to the pupils. In the schools of Holbrook and Toledo, public library books were used regularly by the children under assignment from the teachers. Children who attended the Wells grammar school in Boston were encouraged to find additional information at the library and to report in the class room on the books they had consulted. In other ways through the initiative of either schools or public libraries, the loss which the children suffered by the absence of the class room library was less keenly felt. The plan of teaching children to use dictionaries, encyclopedias,

* Adams, A new departure in the schools of Quincy, 5-15 (1879). Reprinted in Green, Libraries and schools, 5-24 (1883).

and indexes, which librarians are now urging, was presented at the meeting of the National education association by Miss M. W. Hinman in 1880.*

All this additional reading to be done by the child in relation to his lessons was intended not as an additional task, but as a stimulus to his interest and enjoyment. Not only was "there to be no distinction in his memory between reading as an art learned and reading as a delight discovered," but reading for recreation and reading for information were to be equally inspiring and helpful. To children, at least, there is no invidious distinction between a book of information and one which simply amuses.

In Indiana, Ohio, and Illinois the state teachers' associations have organized reading circles as branches of the teachers' reading circles. In Indiana the young people's reading circle has the same board of directors. Smaller circles are formed in local schools. The reading of one book on the year's list qualifies for membership. Those who read six books of the course receive diplomas, and four seals are given to pupils who complete the course. Such devices keep the children interested in their circle and eager to go on. Twenty books in a group are usually sold to the schools and are paid for out of school funds. An attorney general of Indiana has rendered an opinion that this is a legal and proper expenditure of public money. All the books are bought through the central board of directors at a low cost. The reading circles are

*Hinman, The practical use of reference books. National education association, Proceedings, 1880: 194-203.

†Larned, Books, culture and character. 98 (1906).

not run for profit, but the quality of the books listed would seem to give ground for the suspicion that their selection has not been altogether free from commercial influence. Earlier reading circles were the National young folks' reading circle, the Chautauqua young folks' reading union, and the Columbian reading union. But long distance education, like private gymnastic exercises, is only too liable to fail because of a fundamental weakness in human nature. The lack of the friendly prod of the supervisor is a serious drawback. The Indiana reading circles are in a flourishing condition chiefly because of centralized management and supervision. They take the place of the school library, or it may be more correct to say that their books become the school library.

Contemporaneously with the improvement of the reading books used in the schools and the presentation of new plans for furnishing children with good reading, came the agitation for school libraries and school library laws. For a time text books engaged the attentions of teachers because the school library laws, such as they were, had failed to produce results. Horace Mann's efforts to improve the reading matter available to children had resulted in a school library law in Massachusetts in 1837. Much of the statute-making in other states was based on the New York school district library law (1835). This was not a school library law at all, for it merely provided that taxation for libraries should be based upon the school district division. New York spent its share of the surplus revenue distributed by the federal government

in buying books to establish these libraries, which, however, were intended quite as much for adults as for children. The supervision of the libraries was inadequate, and a decade later almost all of the books had disappeared. In modelling their laws after this ineffective statute, other states copied its defects. Indiana has had a school library law since 1852. The libraries are under the direction of the state board of education, and the superintendent of public instruction selects and distributes the books. In Illinois and Wyoming the state librarian is also superintendent of public instruction. Ohio had a school library law in 1836, which, like the New York law, failed because it made inadequate provision for supervision and fixed too small a unit of taxation. Wisconsin's first constitution (1848) provided for libraries to be bought from the school fund. Of these various legislative attempts to supply books other than text books to schools, the only favorable results were reported from California, which had school libraries in 1854. The state superintendent of public instruction in 1873 commented upon the high standards of selection shown in the choice of books and added that the books were used to an encouraging extent.

Some of the early legislation was well planned. Rhode Island in 1874 adopted a school library law which provided for the supervision and control so generally lacking in other states. A local board, to get state aid for libraries, had to convince the state board of education that it would furnish the books free. Each applicant for a grant from the state treasury was

required to give a list of the books already in the library which had been bought with public funds. State financial aid was necessary then as now, on account of the usual lack of funds in rural districts. Many of the early laws were ineffective because they made no provision for reinforcing local funds. The money for books was derived from various sources. In Michigan the fines for penal offences are set aside for the purchase of books for the school libraries, under a law which is still in force, notwithstanding the opposition of educators. It is an antiquated and inefficient manner in which to provide money for educational necessities.

Most of the states have *permitted* the school district to raise funds by means of taxation, but the taxpayer is generally loath to add to his financial burdens. The early laws were put upon the statute books for the benefit of the rural districts, but they did not succeed. Even when the state gives financial aid toward school libraries, the conditions under which the books are bought or the provisions for their use may be such as to make the money a wasted expenditure. If the law is permissive and depends for effectiveness upon the initiative of the locality, it is likely to remain a dead letter. If there is no supervision of the local purchase of books bought out of school funds or state grant, and no systematic inspection, the quality of the libraries is effected in several adverse ways. The books may not be bought at all, or they may be unsuitable, and not properly used. There is likely to be no addition of new material to the libraries at

regular intervals to keep up interest. If there is no attempt to make the collection of books into a library by providing that some properly qualified person be appointed as librarian, then again the books will probably remain in the box or cupboard unused. When local taxation for school libraries is allowed, as was provided in many of the early school library laws, the law should be made mandatory; otherwise it is likely to be ignored. Legislation which provides for the use of a percentage of the school fund itself is more satisfactory; and when state grants are given, the state library commission or the state board of education should be given authority to direct the expenditure of the money and to supervise the use of the books.*

In the cities of England, the libraries for schools are often bought with school funds, and the books are selected, prepared, and mended by the public library, the school furnishing room and equipment.

France has had school libraries in all elementary schools since 1862. There are 50,000 of these libraries, containing an average of 160 volumes each. Their

* The essentials to be covered by a good school library law, according to Miss J. A. Rathbone, are:

- (1) Mandatory minimum annual tax levy by county
- (2) Compulsory selection from well chosen list made by some recognized and responsible authority
- (3) A central purchasing agency and a state contract price
- (4) A definite and fixed time for annual purchase
- (5) Suitable rules and regulations to prevent scattering of books.

Munroe's cyclopedia of education, 4: 15.

As to the provision for a fixed mill tax there is ground for objection from the fiscal point of view. The "special fund" is a relic of a primitive attitude toward public finance. All public services are important, and it is a question whether the discretion of the apportioning body should be limited by statute. A fixed rate is quite as likely to yield too little as enough, due to the irregular increase of the value of taxable property in relation to community needs.

administration is under the minister of education, and since 1865 there has been a special commission which passes upon the purchase of the books.

Certain American states give not only money, but also helpful advice for the use of the teachers. The New York state department of education has published a syllabus for pupils' reading which contains lists of books to be used by different grades and directions to the teachers. In this syllabus it is recommended that the children be read to during the first four years of their school life, in order to develop their interest in books, to cultivate their imagination, to present a model of expression, and to create ideals. Virginia has a department of public instruction which distributes aid to school libraries in schools which raise amounts equal to those given by the state. In the pamphlet containing a list of books which may be bought with the state money, there are specific instructions to teachers as to the use of the libraries. The teachers are urged to study the tastes of their pupils, to help them select books, to encourage reading in spare moments in school, to lead children into informal talks about the books they have read, to read aloud frequently, to recommend books for collateral reading, and finally not to treat library work as a side issue.

The purpose of school libraries as stated in the Connecticut law is to serve as an aid in the preparation for class room work, and to afford opportunity "for the development of individual tastes and pursuits quite

outside the ordinary routine of school work.” Traveling school libraries in Connecticut are loaned through the state public library commission by the Connecticut society of colonial dames. The lists of the various collections are printed in a state document and the books may be kept three months. When requested most state library commissions send traveling libraries to rural schools.

Although the rural districts are inadequately served through school libraries, the school libraries in large cities have generally been well equipped. About 1860, Mr. Ira Divoll, superintendent of the St. Louis public schools, tried to arouse interest in a public school library and his efforts resulted in the organization of the Public school library society in 1865. The purpose of this library seems to have been surprisingly similar to that of school libraries to-day. “The exhibition of some handsome picture books, the narrative of some lively stories from books in the library will draw the children in large numbers to drink of the fount set flowing for their refreshment, and the taste will invariably grow into a fixed thirst for literary enjoyment rising gradually from the hasty reading of story books to the more deliberate study of literature and science.”⁹ The librarian visited the class rooms and told the pupils of the advantages of the library. Although the society was separately incorporated, it was planned that the library should ultimately be a part of

⁹ Conn. school document, no 5 (1902).

¹⁰ U. S. bureau of education, Special report, 983 (1876).

the school system and in 1869 it was taken over by the school board under an arrangement which provided for joint control by the society and the school authorities. This arrangement continued until the library again became a separate corporation as the St. Louis public library. The Cleveland public library was originally a public school library. In Columbus (O.) the public school library has a collection of 80,000 volumes and lends to forty-nine elementary schools, six high schools, and one normal school. The high school library of Albany established in 1868 is now conducted as a general school library of 30,000 volumes.

Most progressive city school systems have class room libraries and whenever the principal or superintendent happens to recognize the value of the school library, interesting experiments are carried on in the classes. Home reading is reported on in school and in addition the children keep note books. In Utica (N. Y.) a regular course of home reading is planned for the pupils, who report upon books read to the teacher, discuss them together in class and keep note books. During one year over 5000 pupils read and discussed in class over 36,000 books.¹¹ The New York city public schools have appointed a library hour on Friday afternoons, during which the teacher talks of books or reads aloud. A guide to helpful reading arranged by grades has been prepared by the superintendent of schools of Sault Ste. Marie. This has

¹¹ Griffith, A course of reading for children. *Educational Review*, 17: 65-9 (1899).

a blank leaf inserted opposite the titles for the pupil's comments.

Among other interesting innovations at Gary (Ind.) there are special literature teachers, who meet every child for thirty minutes on alternate days. These teachers tell stories and read aloud, and also talk over each child's needs with his regular teacher. The children's outside reading is thereby influenced in a thorough and direct way. A branch of the public library with a street entrance of its own is located in one of the newer buildings. Some of the defects of the ordinary school room teaching of reading and literature, or of the use of public libraries by school children are overcome by this method. The individual child is reached and understood in relation to the rest of his activities as the public librarian could never hope to understand him, and an expert handles the difficult problem of the control of children's reading.

In one of the large Cleveland elementary schools, an adaptation of the Gary plan known as the platoon system, is now being tried. Each subject has a special teacher and a special room. Naturally the room for the teaching of literature would be the library. At the observation school connected with the normal school in Cleveland each teacher sends one group of children at a time to the school library to get the books they want. This avoids the rush hour of the public library and according to the report of the Cleveland Foundation, "the teachers report that it does not result in confusion and the librarian says that she can handle the children and guide their reading much

more satisfactorily than was possible under the old plan"¹³—the old plan being the custom of sending the children to the library after school hours. The Foundation report adds, "If the libraries are to remain in the schools and do their best work, means must be found by which the pupils will be able to go to the library in leisure at different times during the day instead of going in haste at one time. If a room is to be set apart in a school building for library purposes, some means must be found to use that room every day or else it becomes an expensive investment."

Another well considered plan is in use in the schools of Pomona (Cal.), where the children read from lists selected by the teacher. Each child however, chooses the book that appeals to him, and reads it at home or in his spare moments at school. All the pupils are reading different books since there is nothing to be gained by having all the children reading the same book at the same time. Each child reports in class on the book he has read, thus adding to the general interest and information. At the beginning of the second year of this system, each child was allowed to buy a book approved by the teacher to be used instead of the usual reader. These books were exchanged among the members of the class, and at the end of the year every child had had the opportunity to read them all and at the same time had added a book to his private library.

A recent development, which directly affects the

¹³ Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 30 (1916).

content of the school library, has been the study of newspapers and magazines in public schools. The pupils check periodicals for articles which might be of interest to other classes, to their home people, to themselves, and to their own class. In this way standards of reading are developed which must react in a directly favorable way, for many adults read newspapers and magazines rather than books and are in need of standards by which to judge such material. The children are sometimes helped to compile a book of jokes, and the class criticises the jokes which are not suitable. This is better than to ignore or condemn all funny pages and joke books, which the children will read anyway, despite the efforts of the most careful teacher or librarian.

"The school collection," says a school librarian, "can include little besides the essentials and must, therefore, depend upon the libraries—city, county, or state—to round out the reading worlds of the boys and girls, with books of more varied interest."²⁸ There has been little or no special study by librarians of the special needs of the school library and the class room library. The result of having books suitable for school libraries selected by librarians exclusively has often been collections which fail to connect in a helpful way with the children's school work, because the librarians often do not give intensive study to school curricula and methods. On the other hand books for school libraries selected by teachers exclusively, sometimes lack literary merit. In Portland (Ore.) school libraries are selected jointly by both teacher and librar-

ian. For the selection of such a specialized library as the elementary school library, special knowledge is required and special standards must be developed. Under a system of organic control of school and library, with a branch library or children's room in every grade building, the problem of book selection would be much simplified, for a larger collection would be available.

The discussion thus far has been confined mainly to the elementary school library administered, purchased, and entirely controlled by the school authorities. However elementary school libraries are also administered by the public library with books owned either by the school or the library. Class room libraries are frequently supplied entirely by the public library; and there are various ways of sharing the expenses. In some cities the grade school libraries are conducted as branches of the public library, having a separate room in a school building. This involves a certain amount of joint organic control.

It is the opinion of the committee on elementary school libraries of the national education association¹³ that school libraries should be administered by the public library. This is the librarians' point of view, but it is not always shared by the school authorities. Under a system of joint control of public schools and public library by one board commissioner, the grade school buildings would probably contain children's rooms or library rooms. This would effectually

¹³ Case, Selecting an elementary-school library. National education association, *Proceedings*, 1915:1077.

¹⁴ *Proceedings*, 1915: 1073.

prevent the separation of school and library interests, and give the school children access to a large collection of books without unnecessary and expensive duplication. In Kansas City (Mo.), where school and library are under joint control, the branch libraries in high school buildings have been so successful that all new grade buildings will have library rooms.

Whenever the libraries started by the school afterwards became public libraries, they had already established themselves as deserving of the taxpayers' support before they were made accessible to adults as well as to children by means of separate administration, organization, and quarters. The collection of books in the school room and school building continues to be a necessity for successful teaching, notwithstanding the many examples of the evolution of such libraries into public libraries. "That the library is an essential part of the equipment and activities of the public education is becoming more and more recognized and the tendency of recent legislation is to provide for the establishment and support of public school libraries."¹⁸

There are some interesting legal opinions¹⁹ which serve to confirm the educator's view of the school library. A decision of the supreme court of Michigan in 1877, declared, "The ordinance of 1787, under which this region was first set apart for its future creation into states which have been organized under its sanction, declares that religion, morality, and knowl-

¹⁸ Prefatory remarks in Bulletin of U. S. bureau of education, State school systems (1907).

¹⁹ See Steiner, The legal status of the public library in the United States. American law review, 43:536-46 (1909).

edge were necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, and provided that for these express purposes schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. It is somewhat strange, therefore, to have it suggested that libraries are not within the proper range of school apparatus. . . . Nothing but poverty can make it proper for any school district to deprive itself of the valuable aid of libraries, which enlarge and supplement the work of the teacher."¹⁷ This point of view is advanced even to-day.

We have the teachers to thank not only for the school library, but also for the idea which they have advanced, in and out of season, that the public library is a necessary part of a complete educational system. This they have drilled into the mind of the public, until almost every community recognizes the educational value of a public library, although in practice it may be regarded either as a purely recreational agency or even as a charity.

In any attempt to control and direct the children's reading outside the school, the influence of the teacher is also an important factor. Outside of the home she holds perhaps the highest place in their affections. What she advises has great weight with them. By spending five or six hours daily with her pupils, she can hardly fail to know them thoroughly. If she has any freedom in carrying out the schedule of studies, she can introduce books to the children by means of

¹⁷ Maynard v. Woods, 36 Mich. 423.

story-telling, reading aloud, and dramatizations in which they take part.

If the teacher herself knows little of good literature, her pupils will make that fact evident in their use of the library; and public school teachers, themselves the victims of the earlier methods, often show considerable lack of discrimination in their judgment as to books for children. Yet this ignorance of relative values in the world of books is perhaps no more exasperating to the librarian, than her own ignorance of school aims and methods is to the teacher. In the library the child is considered only in his relation to books; in the school he must be considered in relation to an almost endless variety of factors. With all her other duties, it is not surprising that the teacher should be somewhat indifferent or even hostile to the children's outside reading, particularly if it interferes with their school work.

Since the average grade teacher is so much occupied, some authorities maintain that literature should be taught by a special teacher, as are music and drawing. If the children's librarian had some special pedagogical training, she would be well fitted for such a position. In the meantime the majority of the schools will continue to allow a single teacher to conduct all the lessons, and to direct the children's reading. It is desirable, therefore, that the teacher be equipped as efficiently for this work as for any of her other duties. As has been pointed out, the public librarian has been in a position to detect poor instruction whenever it

has affected the pupil's taste or appreciation of literature, or his ability to use books for his own information. Librarians therefore made the first move to introduce into normal schools courses which would give the prospective teacher (1) instruction in the use of reference books, indexes, and the card catalogue; (2) instruction in the simpler methods of keeping books in order and making them accessible, such as classification according to subject matter; and (3) opportunity to become acquainted with the books themselves. It is along these general lines that a report of the joint committee of the National education association and the American library association in library administration in normal schools was prepared.¹⁸ The librarian of the normal school should be able to conduct such a course, provided she has also had training as a teacher.

As conducted in the leading normal schools, the program indicated seems to place undue emphasis on library technique.

A later report¹⁹ recommends that twenty-five lessons of not less than forty-five minutes be devoted to reference work, the same to children's literature, and that an elective course on technical subjects be provided for teacher-librarians. Only three normal schools in the country give all these recommended courses. The technical side of the work still seems

¹⁸ Baldwin, Report on instruction in library administration in normal schools. 71 p. (1906).

¹⁹ American library association, Committee on standardizing library courses in normal schools. Report. Bulletin 9: 280-2 (1915).

to be emphasized rather than the study of children's books themselves.

The three courses recommended by the normal school committee of the National education association²⁰ include one of ten class periods for study of the uses of a library, which is intended for the personal assistance of the normal school students, one of fifty class periods for the study of children's reading; and one in library organization and administration intended for those teachers who intend to devote their time wholly or in part to the management of school libraries. One hundred class periods are designated for this course. The first course, which should be given in the library by the librarian, should cover the possibilities of the library, the classification, the catalogue, reference books, periodicals, indexes, public documents, investigation of subjects (research), how to read, and book selection. The second course should emphasize the importance and possibilities of children's reading, the problem of directing it, the kinds of children's books, standards of choice, grading, adaptation from original sources, story telling, dramatization, graphic illustration, use of pictures and maps, how to get books at school and public libraries, library rules and regulations, the care of books and what books to buy for one's self. This covers the essential points thoroughly and practically, but no provision seems to be made for reading children's books, unless it is implied under one of the above heads. The third course (elective) would

²⁰ National education association, *Proceedings*, 1915: 1056-64.

include the first two with additional library technique. These courses were prepared after an examination of the answers to questions sent to school supervisors under the general heading "What should a teacher know about the use of books and libraries?"

They put technique where it should be, in a secondary place. In a small rural school library, the teacher, must play the part of librarian, but she never has more than fifty or a hundred books in her library, and so does not need an elaborate system for keeping them in order. In a large city school, the class room libraries are small; but where the library is large as in a high school, there is a growing tendency to employ a person technically trained in library work.

On the whole, teachers do not need to go deeply into matters of library economy. What they need is an acquaintance not only with children's books, but also with those books not written especially for children but well adapted to their use. The study of books of travel, history, biography, and science which may be used with children has scarcely been begun, certainly not in a systematic way, even by librarians. The lists usually repeat the same children's books over and over, and the consultation of these lists is recommended to the prospective teacher as the way to gain familiarity with the proper books to use. The normal school student is sometimes asked to make a list of her own with the idea that by so doing she will get valuable knowledge of the books she lists. The assumption is that she will put on her list only those books which she has read. What she is likely to do, is to go to the

catalogue and look under the heading "Juvenile literature" or "Children's books" as the case may be, consult any lists of juvenile books which may be at hand, and prepare a list without any reading whatever. If the student were asked to make a list of adult books suitable for children, it would be necessary for her to read every book she lists, since there are few lists of this sort. To become familiar with children's books, so-called, the student should also read the books, not merely make lists and hear lectures.

In order to present books to children the teacher as well as the librarian needs to know the principles of psychology which may be applied. Apperception is recognized as an important element in the improvement of the child's reading tastes. By selecting books which conform to his natural interests, the pupil may be led to better reading along the same lines. In the normal school, the teacher pupil becomes familiar with other psychological principles which might well be used in the wise direction of the child's reading. Nothing is suggested as to this feature in the library course for teachers referred to above. Yet to gather precise information as to the reading tastes of certain children at certain ages and the reading matter that ought to be supplied, would seem to be not only valuable training for the pupil teacher, but an indispensable part of her equipment if she is to guide children to good books. One might go so far as to say that without these two fundamental elements in the library course as given in normal schools, that is, familiarity with children's books, and a know-

ledge of psychology applied to the pupil's reading, all the technical training would be superfluous.

In the state normal school at Geneseo, a course in children's literature is given during the junior year, three times a week for twenty weeks. A study is made of different kinds of children's books and methods of presenting them to children. The literary merit of the books is considered as to plot (Is it loose, simple, complex, involved, impossible, overdrawn, etc.?) ; characters (Are they wholesome, natural, well-bred, too good, morbid, life-like, well drawn, etc.?) ; motive of theme (Human sympathy, moral courage, etc.?) ; style (Is the English correct, slangy or babyish?). Special uses of each book are considered ; as to whether it is good for outside reading or reading aloud, and to what age it is adapted. The physical make-up of the books is also considered. Class discussions of outside influences upon children's reading are held. In all of this work the pupil teachers do not listen to lectures on book selection merely, but they examine, read and study the books themselves. A complete and systematic course of instruction in children's literature has been prepared by the staff of the Newark free public library. The course includes instruction to normal school pupils in the principles governing children's reading, the history of children's literature and the test questions to be applied in determining the worth to children of each form of literature. One hundred and forty-four books are to be read in connection with the course. The correspondence-study department of the univer-

sity of Chicago has prepared a course on children's literature, adapted to settlement workers, parents, and writers for children. The course attempts to give a survey of the field of literature for children, the principles, hygienic and psychological, which underlie the selection of such literature, and to require certain reading which will illustrate some of the problems of selection. The course will also include a study of other factors in the child's life which may have an effect upon his reading tastes. The best methods of presenting the literature to children are also considered and the forms of literature best adapted to certain ages are indicated.

The state normal school at Greeley, (Colo.), recognizes the teacher's need of instruction in the principles of book selection and her lack of acquaintance with children's books, and makes special effort to supply that need. At Cedar Falls (Ia.) the students in the library class of the state teacher's college are expected to become familiar with children's literature, and much of their time is given to reading children's books. The state normal school of Mayville, (N. D.), gives to seniors a special one-hour course upon children's literature, which includes examination of books. Most of the normal schools which consider books for children seem to limit the course to lectures on book selection, and few require reading or study of a definite number of books.

Not all the normal schools which give a library course, require it of all their students; which seems to indicate that the value of the training has not yet

been proved to educators. The Wisconsin state board of regents requires twenty weeks of library methods of each normal school student. At the normal school at Geneseo (N. Y.) such a course is also required. Certainly the programs could be made more interesting if emphasis were laid upon the reading and study of books to be used with children rather than upon the technique of library work.

If the librarian is to help conduct the school library, she must understand school methods; if the teacher is to make the pupil's use of the school library a preparation for the use of the public library, she must understand how to get information out of books.

The transfer of the school child from the school library to the public library is the aim. Experience has shown that we do not need to stimulate the use of books as recreation, but the use of books for serious purposes will always need to be encouraged. This is largely the mission of the school library, and it cannot be carried out by the teacher alone. The librarian must give the most sympathetic and intelligent cooperation; if it is sufficiently unselfish, the school library will sooner or later become the training school for the public library. The best interest of the children rather than the convenience of the teacher or the librarian, is the important consideration. Consequently, whether the children should be allowed to take books home from the school library, or whether the school library should contain only books of reference are questions which cannot be decided arbitrarily. Everything depends upon the relative loca-

tion of the school and the library building, upon the constituency served by the school, and upon the methods which the individual teacher can best use. The most effective work with young people is probably done when the books are circulated from school libraries. The New York law provides that every school library shall be a circulating library; it recognizes and gives definite legal status to the position of school librarian and provides for the joint employment of a librarian by public library and school when desirable.

The teacher's superior knowledge of individual children in relation to all their activities, makes it seem expedient that the library leave to the school the direction of the child's early reading. Therefore the teacher must know more of the use of books and of public libraries.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY

It becomes necessary to determine the real aim of the modern high school before we may consider what books the library should contain or the methods by which it should be conducted. The earliest high schools, it appears, were established in a spirit of protest against the narrow classical training supplied by the academies. "It should never be forgotten," said the High school society of New York in its first annual report (1825), "that the grand object of this institution is to prepare the boys for such advancement and such pursuits in life as they are destined to after leaving it."¹ In other words, the purpose was to give substantial secondary training to those who did not intend to go to college as well as to their more fortunate companions. Thus the aim was thoroughly utilitarian and democratic. But as the high schools came to supplant the academies, like them they came under the domination of the colleges, and so gradually became governed by academic rather than practical ideals. It has remained for modern educators to reestablish our system of secondary education upon its original basis, with emphasis upon direct connection with the world of affairs rather

¹ Brown, *American high school*, 28 (1909).

than with the colleges. This reversion is not yet nearly completed.

No part of the high school curriculum has suffered more from college influence than the study of literature. There is no reason to question the sincerity and highmindedness of the various committees of the National education association which were organized between 1893 and 1899 to improve the course of study in secondary schools. But while the members of these committees were in a position to complain of the shortcomings of the students the colleges were receiving from the high schools, they were not in touch with the industrial and social forces influencing the people at large. All the reforms suggested seemed to be for the benefit of the colleges, which would not change curricula or methods, rather than for the welfare of the students.

The reports of the committee of ten (1894) and of the committee on college entrance requirements (1899) were written in the language of suggestion, but the high schools found that the college entrance examination must necessarily determine the high school course; otherwise the student could not enter the college of his choice. That a very small proportion wanted to enter college, made no appreciable difference. The course was arranged for prospective college students.

Some of the books prescribed for the English literature classes were selected because they were no longer protected by copyright, and so could be bought more cheaply by the students at a time when free

text books were the exception rather than the rule. Others were obviously chosen for traditional reasons, with little regard to the needs of real life or real children. Robert Louis Stevenson learned to write, so he said, by means of a careful study of certain prose models; and so some of the Stevensonian patterns were incorporated in the list of required reading in the hope that approximately the same results would follow in the case of the student. Still other books were selected to illustrate epochs in style and form. "The literature that most schools now teach," says an educational reformer, "is partly obsolete, partly ill-timed, rarely effective or appealing. Now nothing is more wasteful of time or in the long run more damaging to good taste than unwilling and spasmodic attention to what history and tradition stamp as meritorious or respectable in literature; nothing more futile than the make-believe by which children are forced to worship as 'classics' or 'standards' what in their hearts they revolt from because it is ill-chosen or ill-adjusted. The historic importance or inherent greatness of a literary document furnishes the best of reasons why a mature critical student of literature or literary history should attend to it; but neither consideration is of the slightest educational cogency in respect to a child at school."²

The opening of public libraries to children was brought about largely because of the unsuitability of the books they had to read in school to interest

² Flexner, *A modern school*, 11-12 (1916).

them or to develop in them a love of good reading. In spite of the use of much black ink on much good white paper in the attempt to show how to make Pope, De Quincey, and Burke interesting to young people, a disinterested person is forced to admit that the eighteenth century writers have little appeal to twentieth century readers, especially to the young. Although the chief educational value of literature comes through the appeal to the emotions, educators have chosen works which do not appeal to the emotions of young people, because they have not been trying to develop children as they are, but to make them familiar with those masterpieces, so-called, which a hypothetical person ought to like. In other words, "the curse which at present rests upon the teaching of English literature in our elementary schools is the imposition upon our young people of *a priori* programs. This way of dealing with the most sacred interests of children is educational quackery and nothing else, whether it proceed from autocratic individuals or from bodies of educators in solemn conclave."⁸

The fact that children did not like the selections of the classicist made little difference so long as educators thought that disagreeable studies were beneficial. For a time anything in school which the pupil enjoyed was looked upon with suspicion as not affording sufficient discipline. The educational conservative still insists that if children do the things

⁸ Dial, 26: 387 (1899).

they like to do and can do best, they are not getting what he considers an education.

Not content with giving such beauty as there might have been in their choice of literature a chance to sink into the minds and hearts of children by the natural method of association, the well meaning reformers tried to impress their worth upon the students by means of the study of rhetoric, philology, form and style, and literary history and biography. This was largely because English language and literature were taught in the only way then known—after the manner of teaching Greek and Latin. Such methods were based upon antiquated views of human nature. When put into practice they not only failed to inspire children with a love and appreciation of literature, but actually turned them from the masterpieces and classics; so much so that to-day the word "classic" has an invidious sound to many ears. Nor did this kind of literary study enable the students to express themselves in well chosen English. Strange to say, we learn from the colleges that many of their own graduates cannot write good English and do not love good books. College graduates frequently become high school teachers. If they have a special degree in literature, they have gained it more often than not by philological research, "a ready road by which mediocrity may proceed to academic honors."

How to teach children to like the books we think they ought to like, is not always clear; but it should be possible to avoid methods of study which will

make them dislike what they might care for under other circumstances. The difficulty seems to lie in the fact that educators have stated their aim in teaching literature to be one thing, and then have aimed at quite a different result. The aim should be "to lead pupils to appreciate thought as thought . . . , to enlarge, enrich, and refine their minds and hearts. The study of grammar, philology, and antiquarianism will help them but little to accomplish this object."⁴ But they must be studied, for the real aim of the whole system is to prepare children to pass examinations.

Three influences seem to be at work in the minds of those who attempt to teach young people to love literature by way of rhetoric, criticism, and the Murray dictionary. The strongest of these is the fact that it has always been taught that way. Not all educators, even when confronted with the failure of the present system of teaching literature, are willing to admit that the methods are wrong; many persist in deploring the general decadence of youth and the materialism of the times.

Another reason for teaching philology and expounding the possible meanings of certain writers, is that the literal-minded educator seems to think that in order to appreciate a work of art one must understand its structure and all of its meaning. Academically speaking, this may be true. Nevertheless, great art has never influenced the world through the world's appreciation of technique. In spite of the decisions

⁴ Bowen, *English literature teaching in schools*, 3 (1891).

of scholars that the masterpiece belongs only to the initiated, the people have adopted many a work of art for their own. Whatever the theory may be in regard to the "looking up of allusions" and kindred operations connected with the study of poetry and other forms of literature, the fact remains that such study may destroy idealism in children, turn them from the good things they might otherwise enjoy, and make them feel that "culture" must necessarily be a bore. Thus the critical method for young people may not only fail to accomplish its avowed object, but may do positive injury. It has been the experience of many librarians that classics which appeal especially to children before they enter high school, become a matter of aversion after they have begun to study them. The most astonishing feature of the whole process is that it is supposed to be cultural in contrast with scientific investigation or manual or vocational training. That the old disciplinary subjects and ways of teaching them are a failure for present day youth, whatever may have been their effect on the children of an earlier generation, is generally conceded. As Dr. Butler has said, "The ever present problem of college entrance is purely artificial and has no business to exist at all. We have ingeniously created it, and are much less ingeniously trying to solve it."⁵

The third influence which keeps these methods hanging around the necks of pupils and teachers is that examinations for emotional and spiritual results of reading cannot be conducted, and colleges must

⁵ Butler, *The meaning of education*, 88 (1901): (Rev. ed. 1915).

examine. It is possible and fairly simple to test the ability of a student to memorize the meanings of words and phrases; it is not so easy to discover the extent to which he has appreciated and understood the literature he has studied. Furthermore, it is an impertinence to try to find out these intimate happenings in the heart and mind of youth. It is scarcely consistent for the dictators of these policies to bemoan the poor taste not only of the high school student, but even of the college graduate, when the methods they still defend drive young people from the good to the trashy.

Since myths and legends, which are the basis of many of the "allusions" in literature, have been introduced into the elementary school curriculum, one aspect of the high school problem is in the way of being solved. Children already familiar with various mythological characters are likely to find that one reason for their dislike of the study of poetry and prose has disappeared.

If the attempt to make scholars of young people has failed, so have the efforts of another branch of the classicists—the exponents of Greek and Latin literature. Even so ardent a classicist as Mr. A. C. Benson confesses that his experience leads him to the belief that the translation of Greek and Latin masterpieces by young people hinders rather than develops a love for literature.* They should learn something of the literature of antiquity, of course, but rather

* Benson, *The place of the classics in secondary schools*. Educational Foundations, 22: 282-93 (1911).

through reading a good English translation than through their own bungling attempts to translate. There are other ways of exercising the mind which accomplish better results, so the plea of mental discipline no longer holds good.

We have seen that appreciation of literature has been thought to be inseparable from a knowledge of structure. The study of rhetoric was cleverly unloaded upon the masterpiece, which had already become overloaded by philology, grammar, composition, and memory tests. Instead of presenting literature as an art, and "if it is not an art it is the most futile and foolish thing ever introduced into the training of the young," scientific and laboratory methods have obsessed literary study, and dissection has been the fashion. The reform of these conditions is being worked out along certain well-defined lines. In the first place, new principles are being established in the selection of books, which must be those best fitted to meet the requirements of the cultural task as well as changing social and industrial conditions. In this undertaking librarians are well qualified to assist, if they are informed as to these newer methods of teaching literature. The progressive English department of the high school will no longer confine its attention to "classics," but will teach children how and what to read by the "realistic treatment of literature [which] would take hold of the child's normal and actual interests in romance, ad-

⁷ Schuyler, English as an art study. *School Review*, 12: 716-21 (1904).

venture, fact or what not, and endeavor to develop them into as effective habits of reading as may be. Translations, adaptations, and originals in the vernacular—old and new—are all available. They ought to be used unconventionally and resourcefully, not in order that the child may get—what he will not get anyway—a conspectus of literary development; not in order that he may some day be certificated as having analyzed a few outstanding literary classics; but solely in order that his interest in books may be carried as far and as high as is for him possible; and in this effort, the methods pursued should be calculated to develop his interest and his taste, not to 'train his mind' or to make of him a make-believe literary scholar. There would be less pretentiousness in the realistic than there is in the orthodox teaching of literature; but perhaps in the end the child would really know and care about some of the living masterpieces and in any event there might exist some connection between the school's teaching and the child's spontaneous out-of-school reading."⁸

Most librarians have the conventional attitude toward literature, and many libraries still approximate the methods of the teaching of the conventional English department. Even if the librarian is in sympathy with the newer spirit, in the selection of books for the English department of the high school, she must necessarily follow the lines laid down in that department. If the old methods are used, the books will need to be works of reference to a large extent. But

⁸ Flexner, *The modern school*, 12 (1916).

in many of the more progressive high schools, an effort is being made to direct the voluntary reading of the pupils by giving credit for it. In making up a list from which the pupils may choose, the high school librarian can cooperate with the English teacher to good effect.

In the Horace Mann high school in New York city, the pupils choose from a wide range of selection. They make out for each book they read, cards containing eight lines of criticism. Some high schools require every child to have a public library card, and to use books outside the high school library for his voluntary reading. In the Danielson (Conn.) high school, eight books a year are required for outside reading. The lists from which the students make their selection contain one hundred titles. These are classified, and no pupil may choose more than four from any one class. Outlines of the books read are handed in to the teacher.

During their first year, the pupils of the Sheffield literary institute belong to a book club. The teacher does not attempt to influence the choice of books by the club members. The children get the books at the public library or anywhere else they choose, and report on them in club meetings. When made responsible for their selection, children are severe critics, and the selection grows steadily better as the points of difference between good and bad are brought out in the club discussions under the direction of the teacher. There is great advantage in having the students see for themselves what it is that makes

a book worthy, instead of having somebody else decide for them. In New London, the Bulkely school uses the public library as a laboratory for its literary work. Credit is given for outside reading, and a course on the use of the library is an integral part of the curriculum. Modern literature, drama, and fiction are successfully used in the girls' high school in Brooklyn, not only as an introduction to standard fiction, but also as a means of interesting the girl who is not much of a reader of anything. The high school library may encourage the ownership of books and the building up of the home library by having on a special shelf some of the attractively bound books from the various inexpensive series of classics now extensively published.

If possible the high school library should contain a wide range of literature, modern as well as classical, but it might also be an advantage to the children if each one had to get some of his required reading from the public library. In Madison (Wis.) each high school student must have a library card, and he must read four books from the public library every year of his course.

Aside from the demands made by literature as literature upon the time and attention of high school pupils, there are other books which also contribute to culture. The development of the high school library is past the stage of existing merely as an adjunct to the English department. The high school has felt the changes taking place in a live system of education. Some of these new elements which must and do effect

the conduct and content of the high school library are: the introduction of differentiation and variety into the high school course, the vocational guidance movement; the social center movement, which will require of the library a more representative collection of books and journals; and new methods of supervised study.⁹

It seems obvious that for such diversified needs only the library within the school building can furnish that expert and careful help which is impossible in the rush hours at a public library.¹⁰

The time has passed when an educator can expect to be heard without protest when he says, "The public schools will never send to higher institutions any very large proportion of the children who are trained in them; but their programs may best be made substantial and systematic by fitting them to the needs of their most intelligent and fortunate pupils." The program referred to is not fitted even to the fortunate pupils; still less does it fit the needs of the large numbers who cannot go to college. Many children who might finish high school, drop out because the curriculum will not stand the test of common sense and reality. The academic conception of bright children is based upon their ability to memorize, not to do or to think. It is significant that the honor men of college often become nonentities, for the curriculum of the old style academy or college does not test

⁹ See Johnston, *Library work and the public schools*. *Public libraries*, 20:457 (1915).

¹⁰ National council of English teachers. Committee on high school libraries, Preliminary report (1915).

the student's ability to use his brain independently. The more one learns of children, the more is he inclined to think that it may be the makers of school programs who are "backward," "deficient," "dull," and "stupid," instead of the children.

The old standbys, the three R's, are only incidental to education. They are worth knowing only as they help us to know and do other things. Boys will learn their mathematics willingly when they find it is an aid to carpentry. Girls can see some interest in chemistry if their studies are connected with cooking. In this way children's natural activities become part of educational forces.

In order to plan reading for children, the educator or the librarian must know what children are really like. He cannot learn this wholly from books on psychology or pedagogy, helpful as they may be; he must study the children themselves. Careful analytical studies of children's tastes in reading have been made by teachers, and they report that in the child himself may be found the principles of selection according to subject matter. In all the adolescent's spontaneous reading, he is seeking definite incidents. Above all he wants action. He is confused by subtlety of expression or involved style, but he responds to the elemental virtues presented in simple language. He thrills upon reading of the hero who does things, whether he be a train robber or a Stanley. The interest of a child under fourteen is mainly in plot and action. He may notice the moral of a story, partly because he has been taught to look for it, but

also because he is really looking for a "lesson." Children's own stories show the tendency to bring the bad to punishment and the good to reward.

One often finds the interests of the child over fourteen directed to abstract virtues, and to the style of the work he is reading. He is interested also in character study, and takes pleasure in writing that brings out personal traits. The differences in boys' and girls' tastes, of which much has been made, are probably due more to training than to inherent qualities; and it is not well to emphasize such superficial differences as there may be.¹¹

The characteristic of the adolescent which it is most important for the high school to recognize, is his romantic spirit. Juvenile court records show that most youthful mischief and much crime originates in the search for romance. The cheap and often evil agencies which attract young people recognize this fact, and use it to greater advantage than have the educators. Yes; the "devil is a cheerful cuss."¹² The devil, in short, applies good psychology while the school men are discussing it. He appeals to the adolescent's desire for life, noise, color, vivacity, activity. How can we reconcile ourselves to the fact that these natural and valuable impulses are being used only by those interested in the money they can make out of them? In the ordinary high school these

¹¹ See Bullock, Some observations on children's reading. National education association, Proceedings, 1897: 1015-21; Ellis, The books children prefer. Dial. 31: 429; Forbush, Studies of boys' tastes in reading. Work with boys. 7: 264-74; Henderson, Report of child reading. New York, Supt. of public instruction. Report, 1897, 2: 978-91.

¹² The Devil is a cheerful cuss. Educational Foundations, 23: 600-5 (1912).

instincts are for the most part ignored or discouraged. Hence it is not surprising that so many of the children who leave high school before their course is completed do so because the factory seems more attractive than the grind of the school.

Librarians have fancied that the craving for romance might be satisfied only by old tales and by certain good literature. No book can kindle the imagination as does scientific investigation. Science has introduced a new element of discovery, conquest and adventure; a new idealism and a new idea of culture—the discovery and conquest of natural forces, as thrilling as any tales of old; the idealism made possible by the discovery of an absolutely truthful universe, with which we must keep ourselves in tune; the culture which comes with the power of adjustment to this universe of law and order. Books of science, which can present these truths without sentimentality are needed in the high school library as supplementary to the laboratory and to text books. There has been a tendency in writing about the high school library to over-emphasize its literary functions. This tendency has been common to those interested in vocational training as well as to librarians interested in the purely literary side of high school library work. It should be emphasized that the vocational school cannot do without the library either on the cultural side or from the practical viewpoint. Vocational training schools need a library strong in their special branches and in books with a more specific cultural value. Likewise—and this librarians are likely to

overlook—as the academic high school is being more and more changed into a high school where both vocational and academic subjects are taught, so the high school library, even when its chief function seems to be literary, cannot neglect the cultural values of the vocational studies and the books which represent such values. Librarians sometimes claim that such books are few. Is not their interest in this kind of literature more feeble than in that which has what is called “cultural” values?

There is another sort of romance which may be presented to children; the romance of modern industry. Just before his death William James declared that the modern heroes are to be found on the railroads and in the shops; that the soldiers of to-day are the doctors and the nurses who fight disease. This is the message of Whitman:

Away with old romance!
Away with novels, plots and plays of foreign
courts, . . .
I raise a voice for far superber themes for poets and
for art,
To exalt the present and the real,
To teach the average man the glory of his daily work
and trade, . . .
To manual work for each and all, to plough, hoe, dig,
To plant and tend the tree, the berry, vegetables, flowers,
For every man to see to it that he really do something,
. . . for every woman too;
I say I bring thee Muse to-day and here,
All occupations, duties broad and close,
Toil, healthy toil and sweat . . .

A cultivated Italian once remarked that to Michael Angelo a steam locomotive would have seemed as wonderful and as beautiful as his work seems to us. It is indeed high time that Americans cease to worship the art and culture of the past, and of other nations, and recognize that their own national life has within it all the elements necessary for a genuine cultivation of the arts. "Our cultural humility," as Mr. Randolph S. Bourne points out in a recent essay, has made us blind to the fact that "a true appreciation of the remote and the magnificent is acquired only after the judgment has learned to discriminate with accuracy and taste between the good and the bad, the sincere and the false of the familiar and contemporaneous art and writing of every day."¹³ Some thoughtful teachers of literature have recognized this fact, and have tried to teach children to discriminate between the good and poor fiction and even motion pictures of the day by inviting discussion of what the children are reading and seeing outside of school. The attempt to turn children from poor literature by having them read Milton has not succeeded, and the most progressive librarians and teachers frankly acknowledge the fact and work from the children's actual tastes, rather than from the remote taste of an older person.¹⁴ In short, true culture is more likely to spring from familiarity with American art as expressed in our modern photography, ceramics, architecture, the folk songs of the negro and the Indian

¹³ *Atlantic Monthly*, 114: 505 (1914).

¹⁴ Hodgson, *The adolescent's prejudices*. *English Journal*, 427-38 (1915).

and of the pioneer days of the West, drama, poetry, fiction, sculpture, painting than from many visits to the Morgan collections or constant study of Pope.

The study of American writings rarely extends to a later period than that of the last quarter century, and those educators who wish to study contemporary novelists and magazines often find it necessary to assume an apologetic attitude before learned conventions busily engaged in admiring the past. Association with that art which expresses the vital interests of other times and other peoples can only postpone the appreciation of that culture which is indigenous. Our own interests are as worthy as those of other generations.

Dr. Charles W. Eliot has so well summed up the changes along these lines needed in secondary education that it seems wise to quote extensively from his recent monograph. These changes in the aim and methods of the high school will not make the library less important, if the librarian is adaptable to the new ideas, but they will vastly change its content. If the practical arts are to be placed on an equal footing with academic subjects, a new science of book selection will have to be developed, and a readjustment in values as between the books representing each class will become necessary.

The best part of all human knowledge has come by exact and studied observation made through the senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. The most important part of education has always been the training of the senses through which that best part of knowledge comes. This training has two precious results in the individual besides the faculty of

accurate observation—one the acquisition of some sort of skill, the other the habit of careful reflection and measured reasoning in precise statement and record. . . .

The boy on a farm has admirable opportunities to train eye, ear, and hand; because he can always be looking at the sky and the soils, the woods, the crops, and the forests, having familiar intercourse with many domestic animals, using various tools, listening to the innumerable sweet sounds which wind, water, birds, and insects make on the countryside, and in his holidays hunting, fishing, and roaming.

Increasing skill in the use of the hands and fingers has undoubtedly had much to do with the development of the human mind ever since man first stood erect, and set free from foot work his fingers and their opposing thumb. One of the best methods of developing the minds of children is practice in the coördinated activities of the brain and hand. If brain, eye, and hand are cooperating, the developing mental effect is increased; and the mental action and reaction is stronger still when eyes, ears, and hands, and the whole nervous system, the memory, and the discriminating judgment are at work together.

. . . The European guilds with their elaborate rules about apprenticeship contributed strongly for centuries to the education of the people through trades, before public schools and education for the masses through books and reading had been thought of. . . .

It follows from these considerations that the training of the senses should always have been a prime object in human education at every stage from primary to professional. That prime object it has never been and is not to-day. The kind of education the modern world has inherited from ancient times was based chiefly on literature. Its principal materials, besides some elementary mathematics, were sacred and profane writings, both prose and poetry, including descriptive narration, history, philosophy, and religion. . . . As a result the programmes of secondary schools in the United States allotted only an insignificant portion of school time to the cultivation of the perceptive power. . . . As a rule the



young men admitted to American colleges . . . possess no skill of eye, ear, or hand. . . .

Since the middle of the eighteenth century a new element in the education of the white race has been developing, slowly for a hundred years but rapidly during the past fifty. This new element is physical, chemical, and biological science. . . . Through the radical work of great inventors and discoverers and of these new professions, all the large industries and transportation methods of the world, and therefore the commerce of the world, have been so changed that the producers and traders of times preceding 1850 would find, . . . that the processes by which they made their livings or their fortunes had completely disappeared. This prodigious change should have instructed the makers of programmes for schools and colleges maintained by nations which were undergoing this great revolution in regard to their means of livelihood; but for the most part professional educators have been and still are, blind to the necessity of a corresponding reformation or revision of the processes of education. . . .

Many highly educated American ministers, lawyers, and teachers have never received any scientific training, have never used any instrument of precision, possess no manual skill whatever. . . . Their entire education has dwelt in the region of language, literature, philosophy, and history, with limited excursions into the field of mathematics. Many an elderly professional man, looking back on his education and examining his own habits of thought and of expression, perceives that his senses were never trained to act with precision, that his habits of thought permit vagueness, obscurity and inaccuracy, and that his spoken or written statement lacks that measured, cautious, candid, simple quality which the scientific spirit fosters and inculcates.

The changes which ought to be made immediately in the programmes of American secondary schools, in order to correct the glaring deficiencies of the present programmes, are chiefly: the introduction of more hand, ear, and eye work—such as drawing, carpentry, turning, music, sewing, cooking, and the giving of much more time to the sciences of observa-

tion—chemistry, physics, biology, and geography—not political, but geological and ethnographical geography. . . . Multitudes of Americans continue to regard the sense-training subjects as fads and superfluities. They say: . . . Let the secondary schools teach thoroughly English, Latin, American history, and mathematics, with a dash of economics and civics, and cease to encumber their programmes with bits of the new sciences and the new sociology. This doctrine is dangerously conservative; for it would restrict the rising generation to memory studies, and give them no real acquaintance with the sciences and arts which within a hundred years have revolutionized all the industries of the white race, modified profoundly all the political and ethical conceptions of the freedom-loving peoples, and added wonderfully to the productive capacity of Europe and America. . . .

The observational, manual, and scientific subjects often awaken in a boy or young man for the first time an intellectual interest and zeal in work which memory studies have never stirred. Hand and eye work often develops a power of concentrated attention which book work had failed to produce, but which can be transferred to book work when once created. . . . The progressive sense training from beginning to end of systematic education is desirable for all pupils, whatever their destination in life, . . . To use a good tool or machine, and get the results it is competent to produce when in skilled hands, is vastly more interesting than reading or hearing about the uses of such a tool or machine. . . . The men who, since the nineteenth century began, have done most for the human race through the right use of their reasons, imaginations, and wills are the men of science, the artists, and the skilled craftsmen, not the metaphysicians, the historians or the rulers. . . . As to the real poets, teachers of religion, and other men of genius, their best work has the scientific quality of precision and truthfulness; and their rhetorical or oratorical work is only their second best.¹⁸

Those librarians who, having been trained in the

¹⁸ Eliot, *Changes needed in American secondary education*. 29p. (1916).

older and traditional methods of classical education, find it difficult to accept these newer definitions, will also find the influence of their libraries diminishing. It matters not whether they approve of this new trend or not; it is upon them, especially is it upon the high school librarian, and they can either make their libraries a force along these newer lines, or cling to the older literary conception of a library and lose their influence or be supplanted.

The high school library is an important factor in reinforcing these new ideas in education. It may become one of the attracting forces which will help to keep in school those young people who are now leaving because of lack of interest. The test of life marks as educated the person who is resourceful, purposeful, intelligent, and appreciative. The kind of education which attempts chiefly to cultivate in children an appreciation of the embellishments of life by means of classical and literary studies, may succeed only in driving them into industries where they will never have time or energy for their appreciation.

Thus the books in the library of the modern high school should be those which represent this newer romanticism and idealism; books which effectively second the manual training and vocational ideas. The high school library might make a special collection on local history, now almost neglected in the schools, or arrange with the local library or historical society for the use of such a collection. Almost every American community has an early history in which the elements of romance and adventure make the dime novel seem

tame reading. Yet it is surprising how little is known of the local pioneers by the younger generation of school children. In Newark the public library has been the chief factor in supplying the schools with information about Newark, its history, government and industries. New Orleans is about to get out a book on New Orleans for school children.

It goes without saying that when the high school gives courses in dressmaking, cooking, carpentry, etc., the library should contain something besides text books on those subjects. If dressmaking is worth studying at all, books on costume as well as the best fashion magazines should be the library's contribution to the course. Carpentry is but an introduction to architectural or cabinet work, and books on houses and furniture should be available to the students in such courses.

Vocational guidance is being seriously undertaken by some high school libraries. In the Grand Rapids high school it is introduced by means of required themes written during the four years. The books, as well as clippings, indexes of vocations, and magazines, in the library are used as aids in writing the themes. In the ninth grade the first semester is devoted to themes on the elements of success in life illustrated by biography which the students get in the high school library. The second semester, the theme is developed by means of the thought of "Know Thyself," and the library furnishes books and essays which present this idea. In the second year, the work of the world is the subject of themes, the books for which need to be carefully selected so that they are not over the heads of the stu-

dents and yet present a fairly accurate picture of the economic aspects of the world's work. "Choosing a vocation" is the subject of the theme of the second semester of the second year, and there are now many books and pamphlets on different vocations and professions, which may be had for the asking;¹⁶ and which furnish information for such a theme. In the third year "Preparation for life's work" is the subject of the theme, which has to do with technical, trade or college training. The students write on "Business ethics" in the second half of this year, and magazine articles necessarily furnish most of the material. The first half of the senior year the theme is devoted to "The individual and society," and in the second half to "The individual and the state." These subjects are broad enough to leave leeway for adaptation by different students. The brief outline given above will no doubt suggest other subjects. The material for such a course is not very plentiful.¹⁷

The local industry or industries should be a subject of natural interest to pupils of high school age, and the library could make a specialty of the books and magazines concerning the industry and its beginnings. If there are foreigners in the community, the high school should be interested in their several countries, something of their history, and the causes of immigration. There are many attractive books on this subject quite within the mental grasp of high school students.

¹⁶ See Hall, *Vocational guidance*. 22p. (1914).

¹⁷ The courses as carried out in this high school, with full lists of the books to be used by the pupils and with samples of themes written by them, will be found in Davis, *Vocational and moral guidance* (1914).

When the community is primarily agricultural in its interests, there is an almost endless amount of free material available to a library; but how many rural schools have agricultural bulletins or monographs in their libraries or take agricultural periodicals?

✓ The modern magazine as a factor in modern education has been too long neglected, but some high schools are using various periodicals in regular study courses. The Barringer high school library of Newark subscribes to thirty or more current periodicals. An important part of this library is a vertical file in which are kept clippings, mimeographed sheets, and pamphlets and leaflets relating to Newark, arranged under the various city departments and municipal activities. Sets of single poems for the use of the English department are kept in the library and lent to teachers for class study. Old magazines not wanted for binding are looked over and interesting articles and stories cut out and bound separately as pamphlets. They are classified, catalogued simply and arranged on shelves by themselves. These small and easily handled pamphlets may be taken home by students while the heavy and cumbersome bound magazine could not.

In a Providence high school the head of the history department uses magazines constantly in his work with the pupils. The periodicals are chosen for their precise English; clearness and definiteness of presentation; unquestioned scholarship; trustworthy and authoritative information; lack of partisanship, and public spirit. Five methods of serious magazine study have been used in this school: (1) The pupil chooses a subject

in current history and is required to hand in references (by date and page) to his subject, and an outline. The results of this study are given to the entire class, which takes notes and is held responsible for what is reported. (2) Pupils are required to keep in their current events note books a record of at least ten events a week—under the headings, Local, National, International, and Foreign. (3) Four or five pupils are excused from a history recitation, and to each is given a different magazine reference on the same subject upon which he must report in class. An outline from the reports is constructed during the class period and entered in the note books. (4) An important national or international topic is followed by the students for several weeks, the teacher suggesting the headings under which the class may organize material. Not only are the present facts studied, but the class investigates history as a basis for the research. This is a most important feature of this research work; for it is really research work excellently conducted. Many college students and even those who do highly paid research work have no idea of getting past experience and events as a basis for present investigations. (5) Daily tests are given on current events and examinations on current problems.

This course has been fully outlined because it is in refreshing contrast to the usual perfunctory work of a current events class. It should be especially interesting to librarians, for it is definite bibliographical work which presents many suggestions for library lessons. Work with magazines has been criticized by some edu-

cational authorities on the ground that the pupils cannot be held to definite work. The above is a method of work which is conducted in the approved scientific spirit. Some of the benefits are given by the head of the department. "Such a use of magazines shows . . . the material and process of history making. It is nothing short of a revelation to young minds to find that history is not a matter of the past only, but is in the making; that the roots of the problems of today extend far into the years back of us. This kind of study furnishes an excellent way of studying civics. . . . Facts learned from a text book are soon forgotten. . . . But when pupils see just how town meetings, city councils, state legislatures, national congresses, and rulers handle public affairs and problems as they arise, the practical facts of civics become a permanent part of their intellectual life." Such work correlates the work of the class room more truly with life, gives the students a modern vocabulary and tends to a formation of a liking for good and serious reading. It broadens the views of young citizens, who are likely to share the partisan views of their parents. It provides "an intelligent basis for sound and trustworthy judgments on contemporaneous movements, institutions, and leaders."¹⁸

In the library of the girls' high school of Brooklyn, a clipping file is kept, and clippings of daily news are displayed on the bulletin board. The pupils themselves do the clipping under the direction of the librarian.

¹⁸ Gathany, Using magazines in history classes. *Outlook*, 107: 1053-6 (1914); see also McAndrew, The use of magazines of current events as text books in high schools. *World's Work*, 25:71-9 (1912).

Supplementary reading lists are posted in the rooms of each grade and in the library room. Photographs and prints are mounted and filed according to subject.

It is well to bear in mind in considering content of the high school library that reading need not necessarily be purposeless in order to afford relaxation or culture. A serious interest has recreational value when it is different from the day's work. It is to be feared that librarians have helped to foster the idea that in order to read for pleasure or culture, one must read literature. The contention of some librarians that there can be no joy, no spontaneity, and nothing inspirational in connection with any reading done in school or in a school library, ought to be sharply challenged by school librarians, especially by high school librarians. Such an attitude hinders that complete sympathy and understanding between public library and public school library which could be of such value to both.

It goes without saying that the high school library should contain something more than reference books and a few classics. The character of the community, the location of the high school, the course of study, and the accessibility of the public library, are important considerations in selecting books and making rules for their use. If the high school is in a thickly populated section, distant from a public library, it would seem eminently practical to have the library in the school open in the evenings, and perhaps to circulate books in the neighborhood. At least the high school library could be used as a reference library in the evening by adults, and this is frequently done. Especially in small

towns, the high school library may be the only place where the young people can find wholesome recreation in the evenings. Its use at a time when the school students do not need it will enable the town, by helping out with the librarian's pay, to have a really first class library service, and will be in line with the wider use of the school plant.

The library in the girls' high school of Brooklyn is the center for various clubs which have grown out of the students' natural interests and are carefully fostered by the librarian. At intervals receptions are held for parents, and at the beginning of the term there are several social meetings in the library with the librarian and the English teacher. In January and again in June of each year the North Central high school of Spokane invites all the 8-A grammar school classes to visit the high school. They are shown over the building, ending their visit in the library, where they are welcomed by the librarian and a student library board. This board is composed of eleven members elected from the three upper classes and manages satisfactorily all matters pertaining to order and discipline.

Instead of the bare unattractive study room where many high school pupils spend several hours of their day and where discipline is difficult, the library and study room are sometimes combined. Says one school librarian of this arrangement:

From my experience with a study room and library combined in a high school of four hundred pupils and my observation of the work of many other high schools, I am led to believe that the problem of discipline disappears as soon as

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the students are taught how to study and the room is filled with the necessary tools for their study.

The study-room walls should be lined with books, there should be cabinets full of pictures, there should be bulletin boards exhibiting these pictures, and special collections of post cards; there should be special shelves for each subject where the most needed books may be placed for short periods, there should be cases exhibiting the process of silk manufacture from the silk worm to the finished goods if that is the subject being studied; there should be a case in which the birds as they appeared in that region are placed during the migratory season. In fact every interest of the school should be represented in this room, practically all of the time, and in addition to this, an attractive list of books should be suggested for vacation and week-end reading, field trips outlined and all sorts of information bulletined that would arouse interest in the students and keep them in touch with the great opportunities about them. . . . In the School of Education, University of Chicago, where the high school study room and library are combined, the librarian has eliminated a large part of the pupil's waste time by showing him how to settle down promptly to study and to help him to form habits of preparing for his study periods with the same thought that he prepares for his class periods. He now comes to the library with the necessary ruler, pencil, pen, note-book, paper, clear understanding of the lesson assignment, etc. The librarian marks the study habits of each pupil and the report is sent to the principal. Poor study habits invariably mean poor class work. Frequently a little help sets the student right; occasionally the student is sent to the school physician, or the psychologist is called in consultation. The students approve this plan because they are getting better results—they are getting their lessons better and in shorter time.¹⁹

The most progressive high school librarian does much to promote the love of good reading. No text

¹⁹ Warren, Some high school library problems. . . . Wilson bulletin, I, no. 1:23 (Mar. 1915).

book study is permitted in the best libraries. There is a growing tendency to employ a technically trained librarian in the high school. Eventually there will be a demand for a librarian who is also a teacher, or at least one who is familiar with educational psychology and pedagogy. In some cases a clerk or even the janitor is the only librarian, and naturally no reference work is done; while the books themselves are locked away in cases untouched by pupils or teachers. The state has probably required that the books be purchased, but there has been no machinery of supervision and administration to see that they are used. A live, enthusiastic librarian is the best remedy for such a condition. Perhaps the most notable symptom of advance in the attitude of the educational world toward the high school library is the insistence that a librarian shall rank with the high school teachers in educational preparation and personality, and be paid accordingly. One of the objections to having the high school administered by the public library is that most public library assistants are not so well educated as the high school teacher. If the high school library is made a branch of the public library, and the school authorities appoint a librarian with the ordinary public library qualifications, much harm might be done to this branch of educational work. Educators are open to conviction on the subject of the good to be done by the high school library, but they cannot be convinced by a librarian who is ignorant of educational methods.

On the other hand, some educators overlook the necessity for any library training and appoint to high



school library positions teachers who have failed at teaching. The same qualities which make a good teacher also make a good librarian. A poor teacher is a poor candidate for a high school library position. Colleges might well include some library training in their educational courses. Library schools too generally neglect courses by qualified educational experts—not librarians—in education. There is considerable room for reciprocity in this matter. A teacher with no library training is indeed unsatisfactory as high school librarian, but a librarian with no pedagogical training is equally deficient, and each branch of workers ought to recognize both facts.

The New York board of regents has prepared a list of approved library schools for the training of high school librarians. The New York city board of superintendents has recommended that no one shall be eligible for appointment to a high school librarianship unless he or she is a graduate of at least a one-year course in a library school approved by the regents. These qualifications do not seem sufficiently high, since a graduate of a one year library school course does not necessarily have the educational equipment of the average high school teacher. The standard for those who administer elementary school library work is better: "The standard of preparation should equal that of the school supervisory staff, and include teaching experience, library school training, and at least two years' experience in general library work."²⁰

²⁰ National education association. Committee on elementary school libraries, Report. Proceedings, 1915:1074-5.

In California most of the high school librarians have had formal library training. In some cases the librarian also holds a teacher's certificate and gives part time to teaching. In the Los Angeles high schools, librarians have the status and salaries of regular high school teachers. The high school rules for Minnesota provide that the librarian must have the educational qualifications of the high school teacher and at least a six weeks' library school course. In this state this means that in 75 per cent of cases the librarian must be a college graduate.

The necessary qualifications for a high school librarian have been so concisely and accurately stated by Dr. Forbes,²¹ that they cannot be presented more effectively.

The high school librarian must have not only the technical and professional training which gives mastery of this instrument, but also the psychological and pedagogical training which is essential to its most effective use. It follows, too, that no office in the whole range of library or teaching work could be invested with more of dignity or efficiency in the work of education. And, finally, if we grant that the function of the library in education is bound up with the genetic or modern view, then the whole progressive element in the profession, I mean those members of it who look upon the technical organization and manipulation of books as only incidental in the great educational work of the librarian, should give vigorous help in the study of educational problems and the transformation of ideals so as to show the way out of the existing chaos. They should take their work as educators in dead earnest and this means that they must study education in its history so as to understand traditional ideals and gauge their force and direction, and they

²¹ New York Libraries, 3: 174 (1912).

must study education in its modern psychological foundations so as to understand that growing conception of it upon the triumph of which depends the greatest contribution they can make to the most important and the most difficult of problems.

The apprentice system in common use in the public library, where it may be either an organized training class or merely a system of getting and training cheap assistants, may have a serious effect upon the high school library. The apprentice idea seems deeply ingrained in libraries, and there is some attempt to put public library apprentices into high school libraries which have a trained librarian that they may gain a knowledge of high school library work. As the high school library field is as yet comparatively unorganized, the apprentice system has not had time to gain foothold. But it presupposes a conception of high school library work as something to be easily learned by a few months in a high school library, a view which certainly ought to be discouraged by earnest high school librarians. The apprentice system is bound to demoralize the high school library situation, dragging down salaries, and lowering standards, as it has done in every other field of work. It may be a necessary evil for public libraries on account of lack of funds, but, if possible, it ought to be prevented from entering the high school library. There is a determined and somewhat successful effort now going on in the high school library world, to raise and maintain standards for the position of high school librarian.

The library school graduate is sometimes fitted by a year or two of apprenticeship in the high school library

to take a position as high school librarian, but she does so at the expense of the librarians whose preparation has included college work and some pedagogical training. If high school librarianship is to be regarded seriously by the school authorities, it must have adequate training behind it. When the educational authorities see untrained girls holding positions where they ought to have equipment equivalent to that of any other high school teacher, their early indifference to the high school library will return, salaries will decline, appropriations will be smaller, and all the work of putting the high school library on its proper footing will have to be done over again. This will be the result of the apprentice system whether the apprentices are library school graduates or from a public library apprentice class. The library school apprentice is obviously more desirable because the standards for admission to a general library school and the breadth of the training are superior to those of an apprentice class. But while a general library school course is indispensable in addition to college and pedagogical training, it is not enough in itself. Neither is the public library assistant even if she has been in a children's room qualified to become an apprentice in a high school library. The requirements of high school library work are so specialized that they demand much more of the librarian than is acquired from either an apprentice course, experience in a public library or a one-year library school course. The high school librarian is a teacher in the best sense of the word and not a clerk.

"The service that the library must render," says

one high school principal," "depends . . . upon the scholarship, the inventive fertility, the tact, and the devotion of the librarian. We are accustomed to be exacting in the qualifications we demand of the teacher, yet one teacher comes in contact with a comparatively small number of pupils, while the librarian has a point of contact with all of them. Have we not, therefore, a right to expect that she be the equal of the other members of the faculty in scholarship, talent, and teaching powers? Is it too much to ask that she have a college degree in addition to her library training? . . . If she has been fortunate enough to have some teaching experience, it will prove an advantage in giving her the teacher's point of view of the service which the library should render, and it will also help her to a better understanding of the needs of the pupils."

The librarian with any experience in high school work also feels that it is necessary for the high school librarian to have college training. "She should have library school training, some general library experience, and the equivalent of a high school teacher's education in college or university. . . . If a public library assistant is chosen, she will need to . . . acquaint herself very thoroughly with the organization, curriculum, and teaching methods of that particular high school."²²

As a member of the faculty of the high school, it should be the special duty of the librarian to direct and guide the outside reading of the pupils. An effective way in which she may establish working relations be-

²² Hargreaves, Possibilities of the high school library. National education association, Proceedings, 1915: 733-4.

²³ Ward, The high school library, 21-2 (1915).

tween herself and other high school teachers is to ask their cooperation in the preparation of a list of books for the school by departments. The teachers will, of course, suggest the books they want for their departments in the routine way. When the heads of the different departments at the University high school of the University of Chicago were asked to make a list of the authorities in their respective subjects, they became so interested in the lists and in the library, that in some cases they gave unlimited time not only to the compilation, but to careful annotation as well. This list was afterwards published by the United States bureau of education.

It is for the librarian of the high school to conduct "library lessons," which may range from simple instruction in the use of catalogues, indexes, and reference books to an elaborate course for which credit is given.

In the Detroit central high school, the course, which continues through all four years, is given in connection with the required English work. Explanation of the library aids is given first, after which the students answer a list of questions by consulting the aids. At the top of these lists is this quotation from Edward Everett Hale, "The difference between an educated person and one not educated is that the first knows how to find what he wants, and the other does not."

The course in library aids is divided into eight parts, one for each English class, and may be outlined as follows:

- (1) The use of indexes—indexes in the same vol-

ume; index to an atlas; city maps; street guides; use of a concordance; and guides to periodical literature.

(2) The purpose and use of a card catalogue; explanation of the system of classification used in most American libraries; and study of a few important reference books. A list of the reference books covering biography, geography, classical history, literature, and general information is given in connection with this section of the course.

(3) An intensive study of indexes; additional reference books, indexes to periodical literature. The importance of the publisher, date and preface of a book is discussed.

(4) The methods of making a bibliography are explained; notable bibliographies on special subjects are noted; and other sources of bibliographical material are considered.

(5) Uses of newspaper annuals; annual reference books; state manuals or blue books; city reports and city manuals. Additional reference books are presented to the class without special study.

(6) Study of encyclopedias and dictionaries.

(7) The publications of the United States government are presented. This involves a study of the organization of the various departments and bureaus.

(8) A general review of the above with questions testing the ability of the student to get information out of books.

A Spokane high school gives a course in the use of the library. Most of the work (which includes the usual study of card catalogues, indexes, etc.) is con-

ducted by the English teacher with supplementary tests by the librarian. The teacher assigns a subject for a bibliography to be handed in as a written exercise. "It would doubtless be better," says the principal,²⁴ "if all this library instruction could be given by a trained librarian, but this is manifestly impossible in a large high school. The present plan has one advantage in that it brings about a close cooperation between teacher and librarian and makes a working knowledge of the library and its facilities a necessary part of the teacher's equipment. Experience has convinced us that this method of giving library instruction works. The verdict of the librarian, who is in the best position to judge, is that it is practical, while it appeals to the pupil and the teacher as one of the most interesting features of the English course."

The use of the library seems not to be taught to any great extent in manual training or commercial high schools, probably because in the past the library has been made primarily of use to the students of the "humanities"; and the high school library has grown up around the needs of classical students who were being taught according to college methods.

It is as important for the child who is taking a commercial course or manual training to know how to use a library as for the student who is going to college. Educational reformers insist that there is no reason for a separate building for manual and vocational training, and that such work should be required as much as work in English. Similarly, English is required in a

²⁴ Hargreaves, *Possibilities of the high school library*. National education association, *Proceedings*, 1915: 732.

manual training course, and with it should go lessons in the use of a library. In each department of the Mechanics' institute of Rochester, special lessons on the books useful to the department are given to the students.²⁸

There are four types of high school libraries: (1) a distinctly reference collection; (2) a public school library bought and entirely controlled by the board of education, as in Spokane, New York City, Los Angeles, Rochester, Albany and Newark; (3) a branch of the public library as in Cleveland, Passaic, and Portland (Ore.); and (4) a library which is a combination of high school and public library, frequently found useful in small towns. There are variations under each of these heads; that is, more or less control by either public library or board of education, and all degrees of cooperation where each authority contributes certain stated features of the library's service. An investigation in New York showed that thirty out of fifty-three high school libraries in that state were open only to teachers and pupils. The others were union libraries in high school buildings, accessible to grade pupils under direction of librarians who supervise the home reading of the pupils; or high school libraries open to the public. In California the county libraries furnish aid to the high schools. Collections of books are deposited in the schools. In one instance a high school turns over its book money to the county library, and the librarian's salary is paid by the school. The library of an-

²⁸ For a list of books and articles describing lessons in library use, see page 369 in bibliography under heading *Instruction in the use of libraries*.

other county is located in the high school building, rent free, and the shelves, tables, and chairs are supplied by the school. The high school library books are retained by the school, but are catalogued, etc., by the county librarian.

According to the report on high school libraries of the National education association²⁶ the high school library under school board control is the common form of administration. "Here," continues the report, "the library is an integral part of the school organization, and the librarian is a recognized member of the faculty, with many of the powers of the head of a department. The success of this type of high school library depends upon the school board's intelligent appreciation of the functions of the library in the modern high school, adequate appropriation for maintenance, care in choosing the right librarian, and close cooperation with the public library." Furthermore, since "the problems of the high school library are more those of the college than the public library . . . this freedom [possible to the individual library under school board control] admits the adaptation of college and other library methods when necessary."²⁷

The high school library as a branch of the public library may not necessarily be open to the public. Branch libraries in high school buildings have a different status and different functions. However, the high school library, whether a branch of the public library or under the control of the board of education, may be

²⁶ Proceedings, 1915: 1068.

²⁷ National council of English teachers. Committee on high school libraries, Preliminary report (1915).

open to the public; and there are many reasons, especially in the small town, why it should be. In Kansas City (Mo.), where the public library is under the same board as the schools, the new high school buildings contain the branch libraries, which have a separate street entrance and are plainly marked Branch Library. This practice is in line with the wider utilization of the school plant, and is obviously the most economical and efficient method of operating branches.²⁸

In some cities where the library and school are under different boards, school authorities object to public library management of school libraries, the objection being based on the difference in the qualifications demanded of the staffs, the different ideas and ideals, and different standards both as to personality and equipment. If public library assistants are employed as high school librarians they usually do not have the training and equipment of the high school teacher, and so cannot establish themselves on the same basis. On the other hand, if school authorities have no conception of the value of a library in the high school, they are likely to neglect it, and to appoint a derelict teacher who cannot do effective library work. "Each plan has its distinct advantages. In many cities the public library can buy books and supplies more economically than the school board and can give better service in this way all through the year. On the other hand, the school board can, as a rule set up higher standards of qualifications for the librarian, and, by offering an independent faculty position with a regular teacher's salary, can at-

²⁸ See chapter seven.

tract the trained and experienced college men and women needed."²⁹

An objection advanced by school authorities to the high school library as a branch of the public library and open to the public, is concerned with the possible hindrance to the reference work with the pupils. Unless there is plenty of help in the library, the reference work with the students and the technical work which goes with it will take the entire time of assistants, who thus cannot adequately serve the public. If the library open to the public is administered by the board of education, or if both library and school are administered by the same board or commissioner these difficulties can be satisfactorily adjusted. In a large city, the branch library located in a high school building would probably have a separate street entrance and a reference room large enough to accommodate the students during school hours. In some cases the public is barred from such libraries until after school hours, but as public libraries are little used in the early morning hours, the objections to the plan on the ground of interference with school work are not practical.³⁰ It would be to the advantage of the high school to have access to the larger reference collection of a branch library, and there would be no difficulty, such as there now is, in getting children to continue to use the library after they leave school. Better reference collections could be bought if there were no necessity for duplication, and a more highly trained librarian could be employed.

²⁹ National education association, *Proceedings*, 1915: 1069.

³⁰ They are well stated by Miss Breck in *The efficient high-school library*. *English Journal*, 5: 10-19 (1916).

Some school librarians maintain that the books for a high school library should be of a higher type than those necessary for a branch library. But as the student uses the branch library also, would it not be a gain to have the librarian able to keep watch on what the student is reading? This she cannot do if the branch is in a separate building. Keeping the books of a high school library of a very high quality will not prevent high school pupils from getting other books, although it may give the librarian a feeling of false satisfaction because she sees them reading only the better books. She is relieved from direct responsibility, but is deprived also of the power of influencing more of the students' choices. It is simply ostrich-like for either school or library to pretend that children will read only the books which each furnishes. The narrower the range of the high school library, the more likely the student is to go elsewhere for his reading.

There seems to be no decisive opinion on the part of librarians or educators as to whether the high school library is best administered by the public library or by the school board. The opinions so far expressed are based upon personal experiences of librarians or isolated cases on either side of the question rather than upon the principles involved. There are well administered high school libraries under school control and also under library control. From the point of view of organization and administration there can be little doubt that all functions involving any sort of teaching—and much modern library work

is teaching—should be under the control of school authorities. From the point of view of economy and efficiency of equipment and control, it is equally plain that a combination of school and library, which would make possible the placing of libraries in school buildings, is highly desirable. The public library in the school building is so pre-eminently the most economic and efficient plan for the ordinary town that the difficulties will no doubt be solved as high school library work develops and as the necessity for closer coordination of school and library administration becomes more apparent.

In the small high school neither of the above plans may be possible. In such cases the teacher in charge of the library may take a course in library methods at a summer school under the auspices of the state library commission, the state library, the state university, or a normal school. In Minnesota a six weeks' course is required of all school librarians. In a small town, the public school and the public library may combine funds and hire an experienced librarian to serve the school during a large part of the school day and the public library certain hours in the afternoon or evening. For the small rural school library the best plan is to have a trained and experienced librarian as state supervisor or school libraries under the state education department as is done in Minnesota. In New Jersey the state library commission does the same sort of work, but there is always the danger in such a plan that exclusive library control

may mean a neglect of some important educational features of a school library.

In the meantime, the importance of the high school library is being increasingly recognized. Connecticut offers aid for the establishment of high school libraries; California and Wisconsin, among other states, condition aid to high schools upon their library as well as laboratory equipment. A new law in New York makes it possible for the state to grant \$100 toward the salary of any high school librarian who measures up to certain standards of professional training. The idea seems to be growing that the library is just as necessary to the high school as to the college; and that it should be something more than a "laboratory" for historical and literary studies. It should meet the natural interests of the children, as the school will more and more meet them, and reinforce those individual aptitudes which it is the business of the school to discover and cultivate.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE LIBRARY RESOURCES OF COUNTRY CHILDREN

"The magnificent gifts recently made to found free libraries in cities have directed special attention to the value of good literature as an educational agency. If it is commendable liberally to endow such libraries in cities possessing literature and wealth, how much more praiseworthy would it be to provide free libraries for the tens of thousands of small villages and hamlets where neither literature nor wealth abound. The frequent calls on the American Sunday school union show how serious and widespread is this need for such literature and how deep is the unsatisfied hunger for it." Following this general statement in the report of the union for 1902, there is specific testimony from the missionaries located in destitute rural districts. From Texas: "The influence of good books has been greater among country people than in cities; for long winter evenings, nowhere to go and nothing to do, give ample time for reading." From Missouri: "On my field there are hundreds of young people who have never read a book because they have none to read."

According to the census of 1910, more than half the population of the United States still lives in the

country, i.e., on farms or in villages of 2,500 inhabitants or less. Correspondingly, the country has 16,000,000 children between the ages of five and twenty to the 11,000,000 of city children. In so small a state as New Jersey, there are communities of people who resemble the mountain whites of the South; and in the New England states the stagnant town and isolated families are a matter of common discussion among sociologists.

It is to the interest of the city that the country children become intelligent and useful citizens. The city continually draws new life from the country, and the degeneracy of the country means loss of strength to the city's population.

The loss of the capable from the farms would mean their ultimate abandonment and a consequent curtailment of the food supply. Most serious of all is the process of natural selection which drains off the fittest of the rural population. Nor is this consideration of rural degeneration beside the mark in the discussion of an educational matter. Ambitious parents, who want their children to have educational advantages, are compelled to move to town or put up with inferior schools and teachers. Such parents are among our most desirable citizens, and in leaving the country they abandon the social and intellectual life of rural districts to the financially poor and mentally impoverished inhabitants. When we have introduced scientific agriculture into rural schools and libraries, therefore, only half the necessary reform is accomplished. All agree that country life is socially

and intellectually barren.¹ Almost the only reading matter that hundreds of country children see are Sunday school leaflets, farm periodicals, the yellow newspapers, and the illustrated catalogues of mail order houses.² Scientific agriculture is needed, to be sure, but the enrichment of the mental environment and the widening of the intellectual horizon, must also be factors in the rural awakening. Because they introduce new ideas and bring the larger world to remote homes, books are not the least important contributions toward the rural revival.

As it is, observe the vicious circle. Country life lacks the richness of opportunities afforded by good schools and libraries. Consequently the most intelligent parents leave the country, and those left behind are little inclined or are unable to improve conditions. Libraries and schools are lacking or inadequate, because the best people have left the country; and the best people have left because these institutions are so poor.³ Country life must be made equal to city life in educational opportunities for children. The country boy or girl is of the same stuff as his city cousin. He deserves to have the same amount of money spent on his schooling, and the state cannot afford to neglect him—a future citizen. Waste places and barren spots in a state's educational system are not only a reproach but a danger. We must recognize rural ignorance and

¹ Report of the country life commission, 60 congress, 2 sess. S. doc. 705, 65p. Also published by Sturgis and Walton, 1913.

² Bailey, What people read. *Library Journal*, 38:387-91 (1913).

³ "It is the desire for education which has taken a good many of our people from the farms," says a Missouri farmer. "The father and mother want their children to go to school."—*St. Louis Republic*, Jan. 18, 1913.

backwardness as a disease to be stamped out by all possible means.

Neither the state nor the nation can prosper, morally speaking, with half its population mentally undernourished. All the arguments for teaching children what to read as well as how to read, apply to country as well as city. Consequently, the reasons for books and libraries for city schools are equally cogent when applied to rural sections. Especially for those who are far from other means of education, books are of prime importance.

The reasons for poor educational facilities in rural districts are not far to seek. During the colonial period, every family and later every community was sufficient unto itself. The necessities of life were manufactured in the household. Isolation was inevitable. Rural conditions to-day still foster the intense individualism bred by American pioneer life. Everywhere else this spirit is becoming subordinated to the modern demand for coordination and cooperation. With the economic and industrial changes that have made self-sufficiency a drawback where once it was a life preserver, must come the community and social way of looking at human activity. Only by getting together on the basis of a common interest can rural citizens solve their problems.

To-day the country is getting seconds in merchandse and seconds in education. It sends the best of its human and farm products to the city, and in return gets the teachers not acceptable in city schools, and for the most part food and clothing not

marketable in good city stores. As social reformers have pointed out, the school can be made the focal point of the social as well as the educational interests of rural districts. At present the rural school, generally speaking, is not playing an important part as a social center for adults and children, because our political policy of hands off has been starving the rural educational system.

The main difficulty has been and still is lack of funds. Good teachers, good librarians, and good books cost money; and most rural neighborhoods either cannot or will not raise the necessary amounts by taxation or subscription. In spite of much legislation for encouragement of school libraries, every survey of rural conditions only serves to confirm the suspicion that only the more intelligent communities are reached by library commissions, women's clubs, and state boards of education.

On account of poor teaching and worse materials with which to teach, less than 25 per cent of the 12,000,000 country pupils ever complete the grades.⁴ "Very grave injustice is being done to-day to a large proportion of the children of the state through the inequalities of school opportunity resulting from the system of local management."⁵ Since most of the children in the country are not in school, it is apparent that the problem of rural library resources for children is wider than that of furnishing books to school children. It is also concerned with the 75 per cent of

⁴ Fairchild, *Status of rural schools*, 18-20 (1912).

⁵ Connecticut. Board of education. Report for 1908, 51. Connecticut. School document, 1909: no. 5: 5.

the children outside the school who may be entirely deprived of reading matter. Conservative American and foreign observers prophesy national humiliation on account of these neglected rural conditions.* In Germany and France the state makes no distinction between the quality of education furnished rural and city children.

Leaving until later a discussion of centralization of administration as a possible remedy for this deficiency in our rural educational system, we may profitably study the several methods of supplying reading matter to country children. Let it be said in passing that the rural community is likely to be better off than the village in respect to such service.

Most of the libraries in isolated communities are placed in the school house as the one common meeting ground. Such collections are supplied or provided for: (1) by the state, under well defined educational laws; (2) by the state library commission, usually on request; (3) by the efforts of private individuals or organizations; (4) through granges or teachers' associations; and (5) by county or township libraries, or by the cooperation of one or more of these agencies.

State laws making possible the use of the school fund for the purchase of school libraries are generally concerned with rural districts, although their provisions may apply equally to cities. The permissive law, by which the township, district, or county may

* See Klemm, *Public education in Germany and the United States* (1911); Plunkett, *Rural life problem in the United States* (1910).

tax itself for libraries has not been effective. Any provision which makes action dependent upon the initiative of a single school, district, county, or township, will work well only in the most progressive communities.

After New York state in 1837 spent \$55,000 to establish school district libraries and provided for their support through local taxation, about twenty states followed the example. The New York law and similar acts used the school district as the basis for taxation. They were not school library laws at all, but school district library laws, and the libraries were designed for adults as well as children. If the books were placed in the school house it was chiefly for the reason that it was a central meeting place. These early attempts failed, because (1) the unit of taxation was too small; not enough money could be raised by taxation in a school district for good schools, not to mention libraries; (2) there was no provision for supervision of the purchases of books, or for continuous additional purchases necessary to keep interest alive; (3) the books were never organized into libraries, but remained collections of books, and very unsuitable collections they were in most cases; (4) the teachers or superintendents who were appointed as librarians were not qualified to administer libraries and were not held responsible for the care of the books; and (5) for lack of a personal, driving enthusiasm behind the book purchases, local interest soon died out. In New York library funds were diverted to other uses, and after about twenty years

most of the books had disappeared. This was a wasteful experiment; but New York at least learned its lesson, which is more than can be said for the other states. To-day New York exercises detailed control over school libraries and public libraries which are supported partly or entirely by public funds. Traveling libraries are sent out by the home education division of the state library, which is controlled by the state education department. This highly centralized administrative body, which is known as the University of the state of New York, is composed of a chancellor, a board of regents, a state commissioner of education, and the state librarian. A fee of five dollars is required for every traveling library, and twenty-five reputable taxpayers must guarantee against loss or damage. Eighty-six per cent of the school districts in New York have permanent school libraries, some of them aided by appropriations from the school fund. The law specifies in an elaborate and careful manner the apportionment of the money for every sort of school and school district. Almost every contingency is provided for. The aim is to make possible local freedom under close supervision and inspection. Other states, without this degree of control, contrive to maintain some authority by specifying conditions under which state aid is to be granted. For example, a sum equal to that given by the state must be raised by school or district, and in most cases the books must be bought from specified lists, or with the approval of the state superintendent of

public instruction, the library department of the state board of education, or the library commission.

Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee have recently passed laws which, in general, grant about ten dollars to the rural school which raises an equal amount for books. The Alabama law authorizes an annual appropriation of one hundred dollars to each county for school libraries. Ten schools may raise ten dollars each, and the county school commissioner then apportions the hundred dollars among them. There are enough contingent factors in a plan of this kind to deprive the poorer school districts of books; and it is precisely these schools which need them. So while such laws, and they are in the majority, are excellent for the most enlightened communities, they do not solve the problem of the backward localities. Among social workers, certain classes are characterized as deficient, delinquent, neglected. Rural communities could be evaluated in precisely the same manner, using perhaps the same descriptive language. Those that fall into any one of the above classifications are a social menace, and should be dealt with as such.

When state aid is granted or money is raised by taxes for books, the state has a right to supervise the purchase of the libraries and their use. Whenever districts are too indifferent to provide such means of development, the state should use its authority as it would in the case of a delinquent individual.

In order to concentrate state aid where it is most

needed, the appropriations for school libraries in Minnesota have recently been restricted to rural ungraded schools and a technically trained librarian, who is an officer under the state board of education, is in charge of their administration. In Vermont aid is given to rural schools through an annual appropriation of \$1000 to the board of library commissioners, which apportions the money among the libraries most useful to schools. Such libraries are not necessarily those which circulate the most books. There are some unique features about the Vermont way of doing things, and a broadside issued by the board of library commissioners is here reproduced on account of its valuable suggestions:

The aim of the board of library commissioners is to help the smaller town libraries already established, and to encourage those towns and villages, now without free public libraries, to start such libraries. The state gives \$100 in books to a town that votes to establish a free library and appropriate a certain sum toward its maintenance. But the state does not stop there. If the library keeps in touch with the outlying district of its town, by sending books to one or more district schools, or by maintaining other branch libraries, the state gives it, on application, *annual* aid to the amount of \$20 and \$25 in books.

Any library may ask the Board of library commissioners for advice on any point. For instance, many small libraries find it hard to choose the books they buy with their yearly appropriation. The Board has helped several with book-lists and will always be glad to help others.

Vermont wishes to give all her children a chance to enjoy such reading and pictures as children near a library enjoy. She thoroughly believes that "the children of to-day are the citizens of to-morrow," and that the more chance

for general development they have now, the better citizens they will become. The most central places for these children are their schoolhouses. So collections of books—stories and other interesting books for children of all ages—called "School libraries," travel to any schools in the state, and towns are specially authorized by law to pay the cost of transportation.

A town without a library, desiring books for adults and children, can get a collection of 45 books by application to the secretary of the Board. Reading clubs, wishing to study a special subject, can also obtain books. A Grange can send for a "Farmers' library" containing agricultural books and stories for its instruction and entertainment. The only cost is that of transportation both ways, about \$1.25.

Quarterly meetings, held in different parts of the state, sometimes with the co-operation of the state superintendent of education or of the commissioner of agriculture, encourage the towns which are bravely supporting their libraries, give them ideas as to methods of work, and raise librarians and librarians in the estimation of their towns as members of a large and helpful body of workers. These meetings are not for librarians alone. They are planned to be of interest to all wide-awake citizens, all who take an active part or interest in any movement that keeps their town, their children and themselves up-to-date, clear-headed, broad-minded *Vermonters*.

Here we have a plan which makes aid dependent upon the assistance given to schools instead of large figures of circulation.

The California library law permits 10 per cent of the school fund of each district to be used for school libraries. Three per cent of the annual school appropriation in every district of Idaho must be used for library purposes. In Utah every school district must spend fifteen cents for every child of school age

upon books other than text books. A tax of not less than ten cents for every child of school age must be levied by every county of Oregon for the establishment of school libraries. Lists of books are selected by the local authorities from the list prepared for the purpose by the state library commission. All the lists from the counties go to the commission, which buys the books in quantities and so more economically. If, however, the local officers neglect to send in requisitions, the commission has the power to buy the books for the delinquent county. These laws should result in a supply of trustworthy books in all the rural schools of Oregon. Arizona, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, and Wisconsin have laws which provide for the taxation of the school district, or whatever the unit for school taxation may be, or use the school fund itself as the basis of support of school libraries.

In framing statutes which are intended mainly for the improvement of libraries in rural schools, certain obvious errors are to be avoided: (1) The unit of taxation must be large enough. School district units are usually too small. Wealthier communities and towns will have to contribute their share toward the education of the neighboring population, and as has been pointed out, it is to their interest to do so. In the United States the township and county are being substituted generally for the small school district for purposes of taxation and administration, chiefly because the earlier method has not worked. (2) Enough supervision must be provided to make books

useful after the school receives them, and to show teachers how to use them. A collection of books will not of itself constitute a library without a person who knows what to get out of them and what the children can get out of them. (3) There must be a scientific study of the book needs of the country child before definite lists are prescribed by law. What are the children of rural districts reading? Do the library commissions know, or do the other state organizations interested in children know? How can a commission or a state educational department furnish books that the rural children will read if they know nothing of these children or their needs? Some of these questions have been answered to a certain extent by an investigation conducted by the Delaware state library commission. The results of this study led to the conclusion that the books which had been sent out as traveling libraries were unsuited to the children who might use them, and as a matter of fact, the children had not been using the books.

Legislators sometimes think that books for young people mean story-books exclusively. Emphasis might well be placed upon the large number of books which help young people in choosing a trade or profession,⁷ or make them conscious of their unused powers and abilities. There are to-day hundreds of books on technical subjects which are quite as essential to the country boy as to the city boy; not to mention those on agriculture and kindred subjects. "Frankly," says one librarian, "if I were teacher, I

⁷ See bibliographies in Davis, Vocational and moral guidance (1914).

should not be so much interested in whether or not a child read the classics, but I should be tremendously interested in finding out the child's hobby, . . . and having found out, I should help him to all the books available on that subject."⁸ The supervisor of school libraries in Minnesota suggested that the school libraries should contain, besides books on the subjects of the curriculum, those which will train country children in habits of observation and help them to identify stars, birds, trees, wild flowers, and animals. It is doubtful if even the state and national agricultural publications and other free material are found to any great extent in country libraries or schools.

Grades in a country school cannot be relied upon properly to classify the children's book needs. In fact, lists which attempt to arrange reading matter for children according to either grade or age should be used with caution. Finally, every argument for good schools and good libraries for city children applies with equal force to the rural situation. The pushing, ambitious, alert individual and community will find all sorts of agencies to give them a boost. On the whole, American life seems designed for the particular benefit of such individualities. They can take care of themselves. But we cannot trust the delinquent or degenerate community to take care of its interests or of ours, any more than we now expect the backward individual to do so.

Forty states have one form or another of school

⁸ Ovitz, Training of rural teachers in the use of books. National education association, Proceedings, 1914: 802-7.

library law. The elements of a model law from a library point of view have been noted elsewhere in these pages.⁹ Results under existing laws have been comparatively meagre, for the same reason that the country school is inefficient and ineffective, namely excessive decentralization of administration. Besides this, there is little coordination as between the state library commission, the state board of education, and the state library in the service they are trying to give rural schools and communities, except in the few cases where they are organically joined. There are other factors which have not been sufficiently considered. Mr. Wolcott, in his library section of the 1912 report of the United States bureau of education, says, "It is now recognized that an essential condition of effective work in library extension is a broader understanding of rural life and its problems. Much work in this direction has proved futile because of its lack of cooperation with other agencies, such as the country church and the rural school, at work for country life uplift. The library can not work alone and work successfully. Another requisite for effective library extension work in rural communities is a knowledge of home conditions . . . In order to meet this need, the methods of the rural social survey may perhaps successfully be employed to ascertain the reading interests and the present book facilities of the people to be reached."

In most states the library laws have been passed at widely separated intervals: laws providing for the

⁹ See chapter three.

establishment of libraries by towns and cities, others township and county library laws, and still others relating to school libraries are provisions of the educational code of the state. These laws overlap, and the agencies to administer them encroach on each other's work. New York has the most effective centralized system. In Tennessee the state board of education has superseded the board of library commissioners; traveling libraries are put under the state library, state financial aid is given to libraries, and the state board of education makes rules for the purchase of books. Since the best and easiest way to reach the country child is through the country school, the best results are obtained in those states where one agency handles the selection and administration of the libraries which go to the rural schools.

All efforts for rural enlightenment in France are conducted with the school as a center. The aim is to make the library movement a factor in the intellectual and social life of the country as well as a contribution to industrial improvement. Upon the zest and interest which may be added to rural living by these means, the commercial welfare of cities and the nation itself depends. For, in a final analysis, the city looks to the country for food and workers. Railroads feel the loss in freight earnings to no small degree if farms are abandoned or neglected. Therefore, business men as well as educators and philanthropists have or should have a utilitarian interest in making country living both pleasant and profitable. National authorities in this country are well aware of these facts, but are not

so free to take constructive action as the European governments with their highly centralized administration. Since 1862 every rural school house in France has had room for a library, which is bought under the supervision of the central government. The expenses are apportioned among the state department of education, the *conseils-generaux*, private individuals, and pupils and teachers. To procure funds for books a society in Jura, "*Les Amis des Livres*," hired a field of one acre, and the thirty-three members furnished seed potatoes and labor for its cultivation. The funds raised in this way went to the purchase of new books for the library. In some of the districts, because the books were old fashioned and unsuited to the children's needs, the teachers started a popular library for parents as well as children. Two cents a time is paid for drawing books and the funds are used for new books. Children often read aloud to their parents, a fact which may explain the large use in some places. In Chaumont (Loir et Cher) sixty-eight children took out 560 books; at Lonray (Orne) twelve children took out sixty books. The school libraries are generally in the best room in the building and the pupils may use them from 4:30 P. M. to 8:00 P. M., and on Saturdays.¹⁰ The central education department of Norway supplies libraries at reduced rates to communities upon the basis of population; say, a certain number of books to every 3,000 people.

The chief work of a state library commission is

¹⁰ Brereton, The rural schools of western France. Gt. Brit. Educ. dept. Special report, 7:1-244 (1902).

to send libraries to towns which have no public libraries or very small ones, and to promote the establishment of new libraries. Some commissions send traveling libraries to rural schools, but generally they are only indirectly concerned with children's reading. By means of summer schools and institutes for teachers as well as librarians, the subject of books for children and methods of presenting them is brought before those who are naturally nearest to the children in rural districts.¹¹ A large part of a commission's contribution to local library needs is given through book lists.

The New Jersey public library commission has recently taken charge of the school libraries in that state. In response to a pamphlet which the commission sent to schools and school supervisors outlining the rules and regulations and the value of cooperation with public libraries, came questions from teachers about books for children, good editions, and other library aid. In order to answer these questions helpfully and practically, the commission assembled at its summer school a school libraries' exhibit, which included among other things collections of books for second-year high school pupils; for rural teachers; about children; books helpful in story telling; good illustrated editions; collections of plays and pageants; and different editions of the classics. Pamphlets covering vocational guidance; the free publications

¹¹ For courses of instruction in the use of libraries see p. 369 of bibliography and chapter three.

of the state and national governmental departments, as well as the special publications of such organizations as the Boy Scouts, the Brooklyn children's museum, and the Drama League were shown. Booklets published by manufacturing firms describing the processes by which their output is made, were an interesting feature of the exhibit. Maps, published and sold by the state geological survey were displayed, in addition to samples of good and poor book binding and educational pictures helpful for teaching. The exhibit proved that neither lists of books, written description of methods, nor lectures can equal in helpfulness such a graphic illustration of library tools and methods. Best of all there was much in the exhibit that was suggestive to the rural teacher with small funds to spend for books.

Only the more progressive communities are helped by library commissions, and this means that they are not making much headway, despite heroic efforts, against rural ignorance. Complacency is characteristic of a mind which has no chance or refuses to compare itself with others. Such an attitude is often characteristic of rural sections. Thus the self-satisfied communities, which need advice the most, are often the ones to fail to realize the fact and so do not ask for help from the commission. Hundreds of rural school teachers, who should be expected to represent the intelligence of the community, have never heard of a library commission. Even if they should get help from it, we must remember the 75 per cent of rural

children who are still under twenty but not in school. These young people need reading matter quite as urgently as do the school children.

Some commissions may be aggressive enough to introduce themselves to localities ignorant of their existence, but they have no authority to bring a recalcitrant town to terms and force it to provide proper books for young people. Such educational work as that done by the experts employed by a library commission should not have to depend on a kind of intellectual evangelism or missionary propaganda. The time should have passed when a community may choose whether it shall furnish the elements of education to children.

To force educational advantages upon reluctant communities seems rather the work of the state board of education than of the library commission. Probably the commission as a distinct organization having little relation to the other educational bodies of the state, is only a temporary body destined to exist until it has shown how much there is to be done; after which it may be continued in permanent form as part of the educational system of the state. Experts of the commission are well equipped to make surveys of the state with special reference to the reading matter available to children. In a study made in Minnesota it was found that only a little over half the population is reached by traveling or other libraries. The New Jersey library commission has found over 600 villages of less than 2500 population without library service of any description. The surveys conducted by the

Presbyterian church in Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois, Maryland, Indiana, Ohio and Missouri as well as that of the Georgia club reveal appalling conditions of booklessness in rural districts. These were sociological surveys, which treat the reading problem in an incidental way, but the state of rural backwardness disclosed is of decided interest to educational authorities.¹² There would be more incentive for the commissions to investigate the rural situation in regard to reading if they could report their findings to a body empowered to take immediate steps to remedy conditions. Backed by the power of the whole state educational system, the library extension department could enforce its rules and produce results.

In the Northern states the library commission has often developed from the work of women's clubs and similar organizations. In the South such organizations are still doing the work of a commission to a great extent. Various associations for the improvement of school houses and grounds have used the library as a prize for neat and well maintained schools.

Mrs. Eugene V. Heard of Middleton, Georgia, with the cooperation of the Seaboard Air Line railway company and Mr. Andrew Carnegie, has distributed rural traveling libraries throughout five states. The close relation of the women's clubs to the work of a commission is illustrated in these states where the members of the commission are nominated

¹² Branson, The Georgia club . . . for the study of rural sociology. U. S. Bureau of education. 1913, bulletin 23. 41p.; Thompson and Warner, Social and economic survey of a rural township in northern Minnesota. 46p. (1913).

by the state federation or where one or more of the members of the commission must be representatives of the clubs.

Not only in the United States but also in England, libraries for rural districts and rural schools have been furnished by private individuals. Miss Sophia Sturge of Birmingham sends into the rural parishes boxes of books for country readers. Books are also sent to remote parts of Ireland and to the islands of the Hebrides. Bishop Herford has furnished books to elementary schools and rural parishes in Herfordshire. Fifty books go to a school on payment of one dollar a year by or for the school and the school manager must appoint the head teacher or some other responsible person as librarian. Libraries are exchanged three times a year, and about sixty-five schools and twenty-five parishes have already taken advantage of this opportunity.

In Alabama, Illinois, Kansas, Indiana, and Ohio, the state teachers' associations have organized pupils' reading circles for the particular benefit of country children."

In Maine there is a school improvement league one purpose of which is to furnish "suitable reading matter for pupils and people."¹¹ Money for the traveling libraries which are circulated among the schools belonging to the league, is raised by means of entertainments and exhibitions. In some states library

¹¹ See chapter three.

¹² Butterfield, *Chapters in rural progress*, 127 (1909).

day is celebrated with the cooperation of the county superintendent of schools or even of the state board of education. In Kentucky this is the last day of school. Over 50,000 books were added to school libraries in West Virginia in 1905 as the result of school entertainments, which were given in the school house and included one or more talks or papers on the use of a library, besides music and recitations.

Winnebago county, Illinois, has school district traveling libraries composed of fifty-nine boxes of books, numbering 3,200 volumes. The teachers' institute, under the leadership of the county superintendent, holds a library hour, during which various aspects of children's reading are discussed. The institute considers the different kinds of books for children; the care of books; how to interest children in good literature; how to teach them to read; the relation of the library to school work; how to become acquainted with books; what the teacher may need to do to make possible better use of the school library; reports on the library reading done in district schools; and the children's verdict upon the books they have read. When the reading matter itself is the subject of discussion, the institute considers the kind of books suitable for different grades and for reading aloud; why certain books are interesting to children; and what kind of book is valuable to a child as literature. At the meetings in Rockford, books are carried from the public library for the teachers to examine and read. An hour a day is given to enable them to become familiar

with reading suitable for children. This is a noteworthy example of many such efforts to make rural teachers efficient in handling their school libraries.

Among country residents, the Grange is an evidence of the modern tendency toward consolidation, cooperation, and organization so prominent in business, politics, and education. Largely industrial in its interests, the Grange also stands for information and enlightenment. Consequently it has often encouraged the reading of good books by young people and adults. Several commissions circulate their traveling libraries through the Granges, and so maintain relations with communities otherwise difficult to reach.

The Hesperia movement seems to be a unique combination of the Grange and the school improvement league ideas. Hesperia is a small village in Michigan, twelve or fifteen miles from a railroad. The teachers of the country had been associated for some time, but for the sake of closer relations with parents, they finally asked the farmers to meet with them in one of the school houses. At these meetings, which have been increasingly popular for over twenty years, subjects are discussed which are interesting to the agriculturist as a cultivator of children rather than crops. One of the early objects was "to create a taste for good American literature in home and school."¹⁸

After the organization was well under way the county commissioner, prepared a list of books for every grade in the rural schools. At the same time a campaign for school libraries was inaugurated. The

¹⁸ Butterfield, 109.

state educational organization of Michigan encourages local activity. Every library in the state must report to the county commissioner, who in his turn reports to the board of library commissioners. Something still depends on the spirit of individual counties, but the necessity for making some sort of a report on library conditions leads most of the county commissioners to push the matters of libraries.

When a county or township has one large public library, arrangements have sometimes been made between the library and the district in which it is located by which books are furnished to rural as well as urban inhabitants. We have seen that the failure of early library extension was due to the inability of a small group of people to raise money enough even for the bare necessities of administration. Consequently, county and township have come to be the practical divisions for taxation and supervision.

Iowa has a township extension law which enables the township to contribute to the support of a town library in order to provide for book service to non-urban residents. Indiana has a similiar permissive law. The library of Alexandria township, Indiana, has been in operation since 1902 and deposit stations are maintained in schools. In the article on education in the Indiana constitution of 1816 it was provided that 10 per cent for county libraries should be reserved out of the proceeds of the sale of town lots. Only a few libraries were organized under this system and, because money for maintenance was not forthcoming, only one or two remain.

The township law of Indiana of 1852 required a tax for library purposes. The defects of the older provisions were corrected to some extent by giving over the money raised, to the state department for disbursement. The library was a township affair, supported by township funds, but the tax was laid by the state, and so its use could be legitimately directed by the state. The levy under the law of 1852 was for two years only, and as in hundreds of other cases support failed after the expiration of that time. There was no supervision which could keep the books already bought in good condition or available for use. One library organized under this law—the Marion county library at Indianapolis, is still in existence, but according to the law this library may receive only \$75 annually from the county. The public library at Bedford extends its privileges to the citizens of Lawrence county, which contributes toward its support, and there is an old county library at Evansville, which is little used. Apparently none of these libraries sends books to rural readers, who in each case must come to the central library.

The later laws for the foundation of county or township libraries correct in large measure the defects of the law above noted, and the county library system is receiving attention from both educators and librarians, who recommend it as the best method of making books available to a rural population. The California county library law, as the most thoroughgoing of the more recent laws, has attracted widespread interest. It makes possible the rural use of li-

baries already in existence, provides for the establishment of county libraries where they are needed, which will carry on the rural extension work hitherto administered by the state library, and makes the county the unit of taxation. The county librarian, who must be certificated by a state board of examiners, does the work originally undertaken by the state, such as installing new systems in old libraries and cataloguing small libraries. A municipal library may be exempt from the operation of the law, or it may contract with the county supervisors to furnish library service to the county in which it is situated. The county libraries have over a thousand branches, and a school department has been organized to establish branches in schools or school districts.

The New York county library law of 1911 has as yet accomplished nothing owing to the fact that under its provisions the property of any city or town now maintaining a library may be taxed again if the library service is extended to the county.

Several of the states have one or two county libraries organized under special acts, or endowed, and there are several town libraries which furnish service to the county in which they are situated. As the most important aspect of the county library system is that of the organization and administration of a book supply to rural districts, these special cases need not be considered. In Professor Cubberly's hypothetical state of Osceola, the county school house is the center of the county life, and in it is placed the library, under the control of the county board of education,

which will appoint a librarian to be certified by the state and nominated by the county superintendent of education. The county library is to have branches, and the school libraries are administered as part of the county library system. This is not unlike the California law except that in Osceola the state library is a bureau of the state board of education.¹⁶

The importance of the county library system is emphasized by the United States commissioner of education in his report for 1913. "There is great need for county libraries located at county seats with branches in all the towns and villages of the county and in the public schools. . . . Every county in the United States ought to have such a library . . . Every town and city library ought to make some arrangement by which its books would be free to the people of the county in which the libraries are located."

The Oregon law of 1915 establishing branches of county libraries, provides that cities in which county branch libraries may be erected shall guarantee to provide a maintenance fund equal to and not less than 10 per cent of the cost of the branch library building and shall also provide the site. The title to the property remains vested in the county.¹⁷

One is forced to the conclusion that library service to country children is like the old fashioned kind of charity; several agencies imperfectly or not at all coordinated, working zealously in spots, but skipping other spots altogether. It is evident that only the

¹⁶ See Cubberly, *State and county educational reorganization* (1914).

¹⁷ L. Or. 1911, c. 117, as amended 1915, c. 346.

surface of the problem of the reading of rural children is being touched. Discussions of the rural school problem formed an important part of the proceedings of the National education association during the summer of 1912, and rural sociology already has a place in the college curriculum. It has not yet been included in the curricula of library schools, but it has been discussed in the columns of library periodicals, and the proceedings of library associations.

One conspicuous example of the result of futile efforts is the country town and its library service. For the sake of convenience the rural village is here considered as a town of 5,000 inhabitants or less. For all practical purposes, library conditions effecting children may be quite as unsatisfactory in a community of 5,000 as in one of 800, although the census bureau designates as rural all towns of 2,500 or less.

There seems to be an impression abroad that merely to have a pleasing library building with some books in it is in itself an educational benediction. Many a complacent little village congratulates itself on a pretty library where no dirty children are ever allowed, and where the members of the woman's club can always find the latest novel or material for papers on Thibet and radium. There is no glimmering of an idea that the library should be contributing to the education of the school children, and helping those who have left school and need vocational guidance. Not without careful analysis does one venture to assert that it is the rural town and its educational delinquencies that should become the center of library

agitation and reform. Not in the city, but at these points outside of the main currents, are the most neglected children. "It may be asserted with some degree of positiveness that the small village, on the moral and intellectual sides is distinctly inferior to the isolated farm home."¹⁸ Farmers' bulletins issued by state and national governments; expert advice from state universities; and several good agricultural papers are at the disposal of the farmer. But what of the resident of the small town?

Some villages are adjusted to modern conditions, and are in the main current of progress. What is said here is not for them. A progressive, alert community is at all times open to suggestion and new ideas. Such a town will make use of all that the state library commission has to offer; it will seek expert advice and follow it.

There are communities, however, where the "cream of the population" has been skimmed off, and upon such centers the social and educational experts must concentrate their study. The fundamental problems of the country town are due to the degeneration of the good old stock in consequence of industrial changes. Brain power is being concentrated, and the country village has been impoverished by the inevitable drift to the city. Neither "can relief from the dismal prospect portrayed by the despairing evolutionist be found by denying the familiar fact that the most ambitious, the most energetic, the most intellectual, the most competent of the people leave the country to find a

¹⁸ Butterfield, 21.

more congenial home in the city."¹⁹ No inconsiderable numbers of children are growing up in these communities, where the educational administration is in the hands of the older men, who are naturally conservative, likely to be ignorant and stingy in money matters. Under such conditions only the most energetic and ambitious children can survive, intellectually speaking, and if they do they will probably move on to the city, leaving the situation as before.

It is the business of the state to give all its wards, the children, equal opportunities of education and development for the sake of its own future welfare. If the state neglects the future citizens, the national government itself has too much at stake to overlook the matter. If the needs of country children are different from those of other children, this fact should be established and acted upon.

Conditions in the ordinary country village are a logical result of the political doctrine of exclusive local control of local affairs, which was so natural and inevitable before the days of the railroad and of modern industry, and which "may be termed," says Mr. Sidney Webb," the Anarchy of Local Autonomy. It has given the United States the worst local government of any country claiming to be civilized."²⁰

The early settlers of America had escaped from an excessive application of centralized authority in Europe, and so looked with suspicion on any attempts at state interference with individuals or communities.

¹⁹ Anderson, *The country town*, 144 (1906).

²⁰ Webb, *Grants in aid*, 5 (1911).

The argument for centralization as a remedial and preventive method is concerned here only with state administrative control accompanied by local financial freedom. Taxes imposed by a state, or measures involving local expenditures forced upon a locality by state legislatures, seem for the most part unjustifiable. Other than financial functions of the village are not, however, of merely local concern. Education for the young, and books as a necessary part of education, are the business of both state and nation.

The charters of incorporated towns are given by favor of the state as to any other corporation, and the borough or village is an agent for carrying out the purposes of the state government, as well as managing affairs of purely local concern.²¹ "We also find," writes Doctor Goodnow, "that the tendency in almost all the states which have reached a high degree of social development is to subject the actions of local officers, more or less, to central administrative control."²² Furthermore, "local authorities," says another writer, "are coming to assume almost purely administrative positions, as the subordinate authorities carrying out a state wide will on all matters of fundamental importance."²³

When a public service corporation gives inadequate service, the state compels it to mend its ways, so the state should bring to task the villages which neglect their educational duties.

²¹ Bates, Village government in the United States. American political science review, 6: 367-85 (1912).

²² Goodnow, Principles of administrative law of the United States, 62 (1905).

²³ Beard, American government and politics, 655 (1910).

State school systems have begun to deal with the problem of rural education; and there is a growing tendency in educational administration toward centralization of authority and of supervisory power in the hands of a single bureau or commission. The only hope for the usefulness of the library to the village child lies in the same direction. In how many towns where there are Carnegie libraries does the performance within their walls live up to the promise of their triumphant acquisition? The state library commission, probably as a department of the state library, must take the initiative in arousing, aiding, and encouraging the decadent community, which is unwilling or unable to help itself. "The local self government becomes local dryrot; it is valueless."²⁴ We can no longer allow localities to breed ignorance or at best mediocrity, unchecked by state authority, than we now allow them to breed disease. "We are just beginning to see," says a school librarian, "the necessity of having our educational interests unified and wisely administered in a state office."²⁵ Whether this organization is under the state board of education or the state library does not matter so much as the methods used in supervising local libraries.

To the wide awake community, the supervision of the state would be welcome. Successful supervision of school libraries is found in New York, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Oregon, California. The duties of the supervisor or supervisors include: (1) the establishment

²⁴ Verplanck, Necessary legislation. Conn. Pub. doc. 4: 587 (1908).

²⁵ Warren, Some high school library problems. Wilson bulletin, I, no. 2: 20 (1915).

of school libraries instead of collections of books. This involves some knowledge of books and library methods on the part of the teacher. (2) The development of a system of cooperation between school and public library. (3) The compilation of reading lists, in cooperation with teachers, on every subject in the curriculum and for general reading. (4) The reporting of statistics and progress of the school libraries of the state. (5) The informing of teachers through bulletins and institutes of free material they can obtain and keeping them in touch with the newest library material, such as books, magazines, government documents, slides, postal cards, and museum material. (6) The furnishing of good plans of library rooms, approved by both teachers and librarians. (7) Aid to teachers and teacher-librarians in matters of technical detail. (8) Development of cooperative methods of lending books, cataloging etc.²⁸

State inspection, if extended to the small town, would give local librarians some incentive to keep up to date, an incentive they now lack, because they know that no matter what they may do, nobody knows enough to appreciate it, and that they can never get more salary, because there is no more to give. The difficulty of getting a well trained librarian in the small town is in the way of being solved by the plan in use in Minnesota. There the librarian, usually of the high school, will have charge of the school library and of the library service to the community, thus making it possible, by a combination of financial forces

²⁸ Ibid.

to get a well trained person. The high school rules require the librarian to have the same educational qualifications as a high school teacher, which usually means that she must be a college graduate. This requirement is as important for the rural districts as for the cities.

Still more important for the small town is the placing of the library room in the school building. This means economy in construction, in operation, and in service to both community and school,²⁷ and increased efficiency owing to the possibility of more books and a better librarian, when there is no duplication of collections and rooms.

In order to accomplish these results, the consolidation of school and library interests seems inevitable. "It would seem clear that much more effective work could be done, if this [library] work were officially related to the state government combined into one education department with various bureaus as in New York."²⁸ State educational bureaus can command better and more highly trained workers than the small village. Centralization has already improved the schools. For the sake of the country children, it must be urged in library affairs.

The state compels children to learn to read. Educators are agreed that the state is also responsible for

²⁷ See page 217; Johnston, *The school librarian*. . . . Minnesota public library commission, *Notes and news*, IV, no. 9: 157-60 (1915); Gilruth, *Public library in the school*. . . . *Ibid.*, 160-61 (1915); Howe, *Report on the economic utilization of the school plant*. . . . in New York City. Committee on school inquiry of the board of estimate and apportionment. Report, 3: 436-7 (1913).

²⁸ Fairlie, *Local government in villages, towns and counties*, 224 (1906).

teaching these children what and how to read. In order to perform such a function properly and effectively, steps must be taken to regulate the choice of books procured with public funds. The best way to accomplish such an end is through state aid, which leads naturally to state control. Supervision would require reports from the local school or library showing their comparative efficiency. State school boards are as yet unable to get satisfactory statistics from local schools, for, although the schools may be compelled by law to submit some sort of report, the lack of uniformity in the manner of keeping records makes these almost valueless.

Until state library authorities are able to demand uniform statistics from local libraries, they will continue to be without an important instrument of control. Grants of aid or of clerical help from the state library commission are likely to be wasted or only of temporary value, if all the facts about the beneficiary are not available.

If it be contended that state supervision would mean the political corruption of the village, the answer is that state politics compare favorably with village and rural politics. What is still worse from an educational point of view, the wire pulling extends from school trustees to village choir. In the outside world, the strong current of publicity and an awakened social consciousness have swept away many of the sources of corruption in state and national affairs. But the small town is often in an eddy outside this modern stream of progress, and stagnation

is the result. Any one who has lived in a small village will find it impossible to believe that state influences could make matters worse.

When we have considered the political life of the small town we have diagnosed only one of the symptoms of the social disorder. What can be expected of village politics, when we know "the narrowness of the horizon, the pettiness of the endless gossip, the absence of ambition, the feebleness of the faculties, as if the string had broken and the bundle had fallen apart."²⁸

The conviction is spreading that there is nothing sacred about local administration, and that the state and eventually the nation should help to build up an educational system in keeping with the dignity and responsibilities of this country. In the business of educating citizens for a democracy, there is no place for outworn political fetishes.

²⁸ Anderson, 104.

CHAPTER SIX

PUBLIC LIBRARY RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Since most public libraries are entirely independent of the rest of the educational system, various expedients for reaching the school children have been adopted by librarians. Praiseworthy as have been most of the motives back of library efforts to cooperate with schools, others, as revealed in the published papers of librarians themselves, are less to be commended. The influence of the teacher is recognized as an important factor in directing children's reading. Consequently, she is often approached directly by the librarian with suggestions as to methods for encouraging children to use the public library or with offers of library books for use in the class room. Librarians generally complain of the failure of many such plans owing as they think to ignorance or indifference on the part of the teacher. On the other hand, the teacher is inclined to look with suspicion on any plan which may add to her responsibilities, especially if she can see nothing definite to be gained by it. Too often she may be justified by the fact that the library may be using this means primarily to increase the number of books issued for the sake of statistics. Funds for the purchase of books are often

apportioned according to the number of books issued, and statistics of circulation therefore receive an unfortunately large amount of the attention and consideration of the practical librarian. Moreover, the librarian is not always successful in concealing from the teacher her feeling of superiority or her own ignorance of school aims and methods.

Cooperation is made easier if the librarian puts herself in the position of asking advice from the teacher and offering help whether it seems to be of direct advantage to the library or not. True, the teachers may be the victims of the stereotyped kind of instruction given in many normal schools, which seems to ignore the use of books other than text books in the education of children. But teachers are responsible for results to those in authority over them by whom their work is directed. In order to make the library useful to the school, the librarian will find it desirable to convince the teachers' superiors, rather than the teachers, of the benefits the pupils may derive from the use of library books. School superintendents and principals are sometimes more occupied with political matters than with the welfare of their pupils; and there have been instances where the public library was not encouraged to send books to the school or to give library service in other ways, because the members of the board of education wished to handle all the books used in the schools and to control all the appointments, for reasons best known to themselves. On the other hand, it is apparent that some educational authorities are dubious about the

public library's methods of approaching children; consequently they distrust advances on the part of the library, particularly when they do not seem to be based upon an understanding of educational principles. "My criticism is not against the motives of the library," says one teacher, "but against its method, which, it seems to me, defeats its own purpose and while it aims to cultivate a reading faculty, secures only a reading habit. . . . Librarians who have had no experience in teaching will hardly be able to form a just conception of the average teacher's mental attainments and spiritual needs. Her judgments are apt to be too severe, for she fails to realize that while her environment is stimulating, refining, and broadly educative, the teacher's is very apt to become exhausting physically, narrowing mentally and even deadening spiritually."¹

Cooperation may take the form, first of all, of consultations with the teachers about individual children and about the purchase of books for both library and schools. School representation on the library's book committee will pave the way for cordial relationships and put at the service of the librarian the expert knowledge which he cannot command so readily in any other way.

For the work done in the library building, a sympathetic attitude toward educational matters is quite as important. Here again, the librarian needs the advice and help of the school authorities. The chil-

¹ MacKenzie, *Public schools and public libraries*. *Public Libraries*, 2: 424-5 (1897).

dren's room in a public library has such a dramatic and sentimental appeal that the librarian may not care to inquire very deeply into its justification as an educational influence. By giving help to the teachers of a community it is possible to reach in a systematic and thorough way nearly all the children. If the chief part of the library's work with children is concentrated in the children's room, the return on the time, money, and energy invested is at best uncertain, since (1) only a small proportion of the children are reached; (2) the library has no opportunity to know individual children except in their relation to books; and (3) even in that relation, the librarian can have no means of determining when a child needs a particular book, for she knows nothing of the rest of the child's education and perhaps little of other influences in his life.

Only teachers can do the intimate personal work with children which is so important in directing their reading. Consequently, the books, service, and information which the library is able to supply to the schools through the teachers are what counts.

One of the first attempts at cooperation between library and school was made in Worcester in 1879. The superintendent of schools was also a member of the board of directors of the public library; and he, with the principal of the normal school, and the librarian constituted a committee on the cooperative plan. It was decided that the use of the library books should extend to the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades.

Geography was chosen as the subject for which collateral reading was to be supplied. Special library cards were given to teachers upon which they could take out collections for their classes. Cards upon which pupils could take books home from the class room libraries were also distributed through the teachers. At first the work was somewhat hindered by a lack of information as to just which books could be used with children. Otherwise the plan worked well from the beginning.

In 1899 the Boston public library had a reference room for school children and book deposits were sent out to class rooms. Before the first children's room was established, Mrs. Sanders of Pawtucket was carrying on library work with school children. Library books for class rooms are selected by the principal of the schools in Providence, and he carefully supervises the children's reading of them. The use of library books has long been an important part of the notable educational work done in the Springfield (Mass.) schools. The teachers come to the library and in the school reference room, select such material as they think suitable. The books are then sent by the library to the schools. In Springfield as well as in Worcester, topics are assigned to pupils, who are required to arrange the material consulted in the order of its merit. This method has proved to be of unusual interest to the children, and it is worthy of consideration as an indirect means of giving library lessons. In the cities where the library has been or

is part of the educational organization, collateral reading in the schools has been a prominent feature of the school work.

In general, the library's efforts to be of assistance to the schools has included certain well defined aims and methods, which are (1) to make the use of the public library continuous for the children from the earliest possible age; (2) to cooperate with the teacher in guiding and limiting reading during the school life of the child, and to ask her advice concerning the kind of books needed by individual children; (3) to give aid at the library in the preparation of the pupils' lessons, especially in the case of children in whose homes study is impossible; (4) to furnish the schools with supplementary school room libraries and loans of pictures; (5) to furnish instruction in the use of catalogues, indexes, and books of reference; (6) to furnish lists of books arranged according to grades; and (7) to give special aid and privileges to teachers. Methods vary according to the presence or absence of cordial and mutually confidential relations between the school and the library. These methods will be considered in order:

(1) The effort of the librarian has been directed toward making the use of the library continuous from earliest school age to latest school age. But, with the end of school attendance, the children have often ceased to use any library. The continuous use of public library books by pupils through all the grades is not so important as some certain way of transferring to the public library the children's interests in

the studies and books they have had in school. Since the reorganization of educational institutions, which will make education a continuous process, is not yet accomplished, "one can still trace the several metaphysical theories, the several theories of the nature of life and of school organization, laid beside one another in our school system like the geological evidences in some upheaved stratum of the ancient earth."

The scholastic type of education has serious results when it concerns the working child and his relation to educational opportunities, among which the library should have a prominent place. In this country, a feeling of uneasiness over the lack of library attraction for the adolescent child is increasing among librarians, and there have been some efforts to establish intermediate departments in libraries. But for the solution of the problem, we must go further. Young people will not suddenly come to make serious use of a library when heretofore their use of books in the children's room has been mainly recreational. A different attitude toward the use of the library will have to be established in the higher grades of school. Furthermore, when the child leaves school, the library will have to make a systematic effort to keep track of him and sustain his interest in self education. This has been tried successfully at Grand Rapids where the librarian gets the names and addresses of children leaving school, and sends them the following letter:

² Collier, Industrial education in the metropolis, Paper read before the Efficiency society, Dec. 30, 1912.

DONT BE A QUITTER

Hutchins Smith—I shall call him by that name here—is a friend of mine in Baltimore who works for an electrical company. He gets several thousands dollars a year although not long ago he thought he was doing well when he got several dollars a week.

You are interested in the story of Smith? Well, Smith, when he left school to go to work started right, and then kept right. He made up his mind to know all he possibly could about electricity. Soon he discovered that the easiest and best way to do this along with work was to read the books in the public library on this subject, to read the electrical papers as they came to the reading rooms every week, and to watch for all the new books on electricity that came to the library from time to time. In this way Smith worked his way from one position to another in the company. Was not the earning of these promotions worth while?

Boys and girls, young men and young women, are doing this right along in all our cities: learning more about their daily work, getting ideas from books and papers in public libraries, and in this way continuing their education. Edison did this very thing in the public library of Detroit when he was a messenger boy in that city.

On leaving school to go to work you are very much interested in wages. You want to earn just as much as you can right now, and you want to earn more next year and the year after. What positions could you get if you could not read or write? A moments thought tells you that even the least bit of education pays. Ignorance is never a recommendation for anyone, for everyone wants the man who is efficient—the man who “knows how” to do something, does it—and can always be depended on to do it well. And the basis of this efficiency is knowledge.

You must not think because you have left school that your education is finished. This world has not use for person who has stopped learning, who thinks he knows it all. Such a person is a quitter; and nobody likes a quitter.

Education helps a man to earn more because it makes him worth more, worth more to himself, and more to his employers. This is true because it makes him more efficient—adds brains to the strength of his arms. Your years in school have already done much to help you in this direction; but the schools can only fit you to start in the right way. It is for you to continue in it; for as Lowell says, "The better part of every man's education is that which he gives himself."

Do you think there is no chance for you to continue to learn from books because you have left school? Such a thought is a great mistake. Opportunities to learn come to every one. They even break into jail, for some of the fellows in the state prisons, with only half a chance and a record to live down, are using books to fit themselves to do good work successfully after they get out.

Have you ever thought of continuing your education—getting more knowledge, absorbing new ideas, and enlarging your experience from the experience of others—while you are at work?

There is in this city an educational institution that enables you to do this very thing, whatever business, trade or calling you may follow. In this educational institution, by the way, thousands of persons are enrolled, more than are enrolled as students in the largest university in the country. This institution is the Public Library with its wealth of books, pamphlets and magazines in its reading rooms and its other activities, all ready to supply you freely with instruction, information and enjoyment.

The schools teach us to read and write and a lot of the things we know. But we don't stop learning things when we leave school; for the gaining of knowledge is a "continuous performance." It lasts as long as we live, and there is no end of useful and interesting things to know: about our city, our state, our nation, about science and about art, and most of all in its immediate importance, about the very work we are doing every day and by which we earn our living. To know these things makes life more interesting, fuller and

richer in every way, and it makes us more valuable, both to ourselves and to our friends and neighbors. Being more valuable means the power of earning more money.

This is what thousands of young men and women are doing all over the world, learning more about the world, and the work they are doing in it from the books and magazines and papers in the public libraries. They are doing it right here in this city. Why not you?

Continue your education at the library. As a public institution it is maintained for this very purpose—free for your use. Why not give several hours a week to the connected reading of books and papers that are worth while? This will be the right start for you. It will give you a better chance at the *whole of life*.

It will afford the librarian great pleasure to talk this over with you, whether you are using the library or not. You can call for this purpose almost any hour of the day, or you can write.

I am sure that you, like every other boy or girl on leaving school, want to start your work in life right, that you want to get along well and become a useful man or woman. Begin now to get the best experience of others through the study of the books and papers in the public library, and *don't be a quitter*.

The Washington Public Library makes use of the school census to determine what proportion of the children in the city are being reached. Regular reports from the probation officers and from the public officers who give out working papers to the children, will open up avenues of approach to the children out of school. In Passaic letters are sent from the library to the children who have just received their certificates.

(2) Few librarians, apparently, are asking the teacher's advice about the reading of individual chil-

dren or about the selection of books for the children's room and for the collections sent to the schools. Consultation with the teachers is one of the best ways to establish friendly relations between schools and library. On the other hand the children's librarian cannot do individual and conscientious work with the children without consulting the teachers. As Mr. P. B. Wright says, "A library laying out its work independent of the teacher is likely to prove a detriment to a large number of pupils in furnishing what is not essential to their work or in not supplying what is needed at the proper time."³ When a child is about to join the library, it might be wise for the librarian to consult the teacher as to the advisability of his doing so. This could be made a matter of form just as is obtaining the parent's signature, with this difference, that the teacher should be consulted and not given a bunch of cards to sign.

The suggestions of teachers as to pupils' tastes and capacities and as to suitable and timely book purchases would be especially valuable in the case of the timid and backward children, because "the danger to individuals is far less with a comprehensive scheme embracing all children than with methods where the clever children secure more than their share of school and library."⁴ It is precisely these clever, book-crazy children who receive the most attention from the library, while the others are lost in the rush.

³ Wright, *The relation of the public library to the public school. Public Libraries*, 4: 12 (1899).

⁴ Ballinger, *Children's reading halls. Library association record*, 5: 558 (1903).

(3) During school years, familiarity with the public library on the part of the pupils can be secured by having the teachers refer them to the library for definite information. As the school gives more and more attention to the child's spontaneous interests as well as to those which may become the basis for his life work, these interests may be made the subject of his work in the library. Thus the habit of consulting books will be well established at the close of school life. The public library at Newark has had a special room for the school children containing a reference library of about 300 volumes. This collection includes the usual reference books used by both adults and children; collections of poetry both English and American; books concerning the myths of Greece and Rome; elementary and standard geographies, histories, books of science, and a complete file of St. Nicholas. The reference room furnishes help to pupils by means of mimeographed copies of poems which are often called for by the teachers; through a file in which are kept clippings from newspapers and magazines, pamphlets, etc. arranged according to subject matter and carefully indexed, and by means of a special collection on Newark, its history, government, industries, geography and natural history.

The children's rooms in the branches of the New York Public Library have reference collections which were selected by the supervisor of work with schools in consultation with the supervisor of children's work. These libraries include some of the reference books used in the adult reference room, reference books writ-

ten especially for children and collections of poetry, besides simply written books on United States history, science and geography. In some of the branches, this reference department of the children's room is fenced off from the circulation department and only children who want to study are admitted. Young people who have received help with their lessons in such reference departments or help in looking up their outside interests, are likely to continue to use the library in the way to which they are thus accustomed. Consequently, the reference department becomes an important factor in establishing definite and lasting connections with children. To conduct such a department successfully, the librarian will find it necessary to be on cordial terms with the teachers, for the library must be notified in advance of the subjects studied, so that the proper references may be on hand.

Most public libraries send small collections of books to classrooms once or twice a year or oftener. As an independent institution the library can scarcely expect to dictate to school authorities the reading they shall use in every grade without the constant advice of principals or teachers. It is true that librarians know more of books than the average teacher, but they know so little of the child's education that their book knowledge has only partial utility.

Librarians consider that the manner of supplying class room libraries in Buffalo is satisfactory. In that city the permanent collections in the class rooms contain only reference books. The public library furnishes all the supplementary reading. In Pomfret,

Vermont, small libraries are sent from the public library to rural school houses in the town. Besides seven high school branches, the Cleveland public library has nine elementary school branches, and supplies over three hundred sets of class room libraries. The elementary and high school branches have permanent collections supplemented by loans from the main library. The class room libraries are supplied from a class room collection.

The rules for the circulation of books from the class room libraries should differ according to the distance of the school from the main library and the best use which the teacher can make of the books. There can be no rule which will apply to every case. Educators believe it to be desirable to circulate books from the school libraries, although librarians generally think this is unwise, because the children do not become accustomed to the use of the public library. Here again the public library situated in the school building would counteract any such tendency. In any case the teacher should have a hand in selecting the books which she is to use in her classes. This is by no means the practice among libraries. Usually the librarian makes up the collection; at best the teacher selects from a limited collection which has been first selected by the librarian. No doubt this results in some saving of time for the teacher, but she might well be helped to select from the entire children's collection or, when children's books are less used than now, from among adult books as well.

Graded lists or annotated catalogues are sometimes used by teachers in making up their class room libraries, but it is far better for the teacher to see the books. Books which fit the eighth grade in one city may be quite unsuitable for that grade in another city, since the grades in American schools are not an absolute standard by which to measure reading ability. Lists may be a guide to approximately suitable books, but when they are prepared by librarians who have had little experience with school conditions, they do not always fit the particular grade for which they were designed. This is inevitable; even if teachers made up a graded list which was satisfactory for the school in which they happened to be, it might not be adapted to the school on the other side of the town and still less to the same grade in a different city or in a rural community. Books need to be selected for specific classes, each of which has individuality of its own. Children do not come in bunches; their reading ability is extremely diverse, as are their interests, even at the same age, and cannot be determined by their grade any more than by the color of their eyes.

The method of charging the books sent from the library to the school should be as simple as possible, since the teacher has neither time nor energy to keep complicated records. In the book pockets of every school library book in the Madison (Wis.) public library two cards are kept; one is retained at the library when the book goes to the school, the other is used to charge the book to the pupil in the class room.

The children themselves do the charging by signing their names and noting the date on the cards when they take books home.

(4) Picture loans are in favor with teachers. The pictures, which may be cut from old or duplicate copies of magazines or from discarded books, should be those which illustrate definite subjects. They may include portraits of famous people, local, international, and historical; everything which well illustrates geography and travel; and good copies of paintings and other works of art. There should also be specimens of book illustrations and pictures which show definite action, but not pretty-pretty pictures of no discernible meaning or pictures of impossibly perfect and insipid women and children which serve no purpose except to indicate the artist's lack of originality.

In the library at Newark the pictures are mounted and classified according to the subjects which they illustrate. The mounted collection now numbers over 50,000 pictures. When new pictures are received, only those in great demand are mounted at once; others are classified and mounted when called for. Among other libraries which lend pictures to schools and individuals are those at Springfield (Mass.), Cincinnati, Dubuque, Port Huron, Northampton, Buffalo, and Portland (Ore.)

(5) Instruction in the use of reference books, catalogues, indexes etc. is sometimes given by the librarian in the schools. All concerned are better

satisfied when this is done in the library, where laboratory experimentation is possible. Library lessons are sometimes rather sketchy, taking the form of talks by the librarian and a personally conducted tour of the library. A more effective method is to assign to each pupil a particular subject chosen in conference. In gathering his material the pupil will learn the use of most of the common reference books. This makes more work for the librarian, but it is more helpful to the children than talks or lectures. If the lessons are arranged with the advice and assistance of the teacher or principal, and if they prove to be of worth, the school authorities are usually willing to give credit for them. In the schools where bookbinding is taught as a craft, there is excellent opportunity for the study of the history of printing and of book making, which may serve to increase the children's respect for books. As an art, a handicraft, and the basis for library lessons, bookbinding appeals to almost every type of mind. When manual training comes to be taught in the lower grades, this craft should surely have a place in the schedule.

At the present, instruction in the use of the library is neither common nor well organized below the high school. In the school of education of the university of Chicago, library lessons are given successfully to children of the third grade. Since so few school children reach high school, it seems a mistake to give such instruction only to high school pupils. The most economical and efficient plan is for the library

assistants to give the information to the teachers, who in turn may give it to the pupils, as is the practice in Newark.

(6) It is a widespread practice among public libraries to furnish lists of books to schools. Lists of books for the use of pupils and teachers, as has been shown in another connection, should not be made by those who are ignorant of modern educational and psychological principles and of the aims and objects of the school curricula. Such knowledge does not proceed from a casual visit to the schools. The preparation of a list should take many months during which the teacher should have an opportunity to pass judgment on the books and to try them out in the class room. Graded lists compiled by librarians do not always give evidence of such study; they are likely to be based upon the librarian's observation as to what children like to read and her opinion as to what they should like to read. Most lists are strong in literature and weak in science and history. In nearly every town and in all cities, there are persons capable of judging the value of books relating to science and history upon whom the librarian may call for authoritative advice. Very often such persons will be the high school teachers. The library at Springfield (Mass.) in revising its juvenile collection, asked the advice of the science teacher as to the "nature books." As a result a large number of juvenile books were discarded. More adult books suitable for children might well be included in the lists for the older grades. Books for vacation reading have been listed by some

librarians, and have proved popular with the young people, especially when they were recommended by the teachers. In Troy (N. Y.) the school, by an arrangement with the public library, gives pupils credit for reading done from the regents' lists during the summer.

(7) Certain libraries give teachers special cards on which they may take books for use in the class room or for private study. Books for the class room, as we have seen, may be sent there directly. It seems unnecessary to provide special study cards for non-fiction. Such a practice is a relic of the over restricted use of public libraries. Any one who cares to take home four or five books on a subject is by that sign a serious reader. If the books are called for by other readers, they may be called in; or duplicate copies may be bought for such emergencies.

There are libraries, notably at Newark and Providence, which provide a special room for the teachers, buy educational books and periodicals, and give special help. The teachers' professional library in Providence has been moved from the high school to the teacher's room in the library, and special funds are provided for the purchase of books. In Newark there is a school department which contains the teachers' professional library of about six hundred titles; over thirty educational periodicals, the back numbers of which are loaned for home use; a text book collection, which includes all the books used in the Newark public schools as well as other text books for comparative study; a model library of about five hundred titles

for children; a reference library for the use of pupils in preparing lessons; a collection of pamphlets, leaflets, and clippings, which includes examination papers, material on the city of Newark, and on the public school curriculum.

At Superior Saturday mornings are reserved at the library for consultation with teachers. The North End branch of the Boston public library has a reference room for teachers. Classes sent from the school for instruction in the use of a public library may conveniently use such a room. If there is an assistant other than the librarian or the children's librarian in charge of school work, who meets the teachers, gives library lessons to school children, and assists in the selection of school libraries, she should, have some special educational training, as well as some practical work in the children's room. Here again familiarity with the school curriculum is not equivalent to a broad general knowledge of educational principles. School authorities can hardly be expected to respond with enthusiasm to offers of library help if the work with the schools is carried on by library clerks who have neither experience in children's work in the library nor anything but the most superficial pedagogical information at their command. It seems obvious that the library workers, who come into contact with school authorities, should be able to talk intelligently of educational matters.

The committee on elementary-school libraries of the national education association⁸ recommends that

⁸ Proceedings, 1915: 1073.

the library work with schools administered by the public library in cities under 100,000 population, be carried on by the chief librarian or children's librarian with a trained assistant. For large cities the class room libraries may be supplied from a special duplicate collection of children's books, which should equal in number the school population. In cities under 250,000 population the committee recommends that the work with schools should be administered by a separate department of the central library. In larger cities, there may be a separate department under the chief librarian, a division of the children's department of the library, or a division of the extension department.

More important than these forms of organization is the recommendation of the committee that "the standard of preparation for those who administer the school work should equal that of the school supervising staff and include teaching experience, library school training, and at least two years' experience in general library work including work in a children's room."

The public library in practice if not in theory is likely to ignore children as potential men and women. The common school system as organized and conducted by the state, considers a child as a future citizen, and not as one of a race apart. His essential child-likeness, which was once tolerated, is recognized as the very stuff out of which his development proceeds. It is the contribution which his ardent spirit and enthusiasms can make toward the progress of society

that should be the chief concern of educators, librarians, and teachers. "To-day let it be said with the utmost emphasis and repeated over and over again, the spirit of youth is the one and only hope of this country, not to say of the world—only it can save us." This spirit must be preserved through the adolescent years when it reaches a climax of dynamic force. At present almost all this energy is wasted because the educational system has practically nothing to do with the masses of young working people who are deprived of guidance and advice at an age when they especially need it. This is largely a problem for the schools, involving, as it does the gradual raising of the compulsory education age limit, but the library has a share of the responsibility.

Library co-operation with schools is not a matter for individual and sporadic efforts depending on local conditions or the personality of teacher or librarian. It demands the thought of far-seeing educators and a certain quality of statesmanship and diplomacy. On the success or failure of such work depends, to some extent, the intelligence on the one hand or the mental inertia on the other of thousands of the children who go from school at so early an age and with so incomplete an education.

The library has neither money nor equipment with which to do any work the results of which are doubtful. Still less should it encroach upon the work of another institution in the equipment of which millions are invested. Librarians will find it necessary to de-

* Hall, *Educational problems*, I, 339 (1911).

termine the precise aim of the library, and how nearly it is approaching this aim. If they do not make this study themselves, the efficiency expert who is abroad in the land will sooner or later make it for them; for the public is becoming informed as to what to expect from the agencies which it supports. As an educational agency the library must be conducted along educational lines which do not conflict with the schools: as a distributing agency it must be administered as efficiently as a large business house which has its follow-up methods, and studies ways and means of approach to every imaginable human being. In the work with school children the librarian must recognize that her most important duty is not toward them but to children and young people out of school, and that the work done for pupils is only by way of preparation and training for this service.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The organic relation between the public library and the common school has been a matter of much uncertainty, both as to theory and practice. The librarian is prone to think that although the public library ought to be a part of the educational plant, it should be conducted separately for administrative reasons. Sometimes the library under the board of education has been subordinated to the schools. In such cases the library may never have proved to the community its importance as an educational institution. Undoubtedly many educators as well as the general public tend to think of the public library as recreational rather than educational in character. But taxation for library support is justified as a means of affording opportunity for further study to those no longer able to go to school or college.¹ If the public library is not considered as a continuation school in this sense it may be because librarians generally have not taught educators to look to it for such service. In other words, the duties of a library have been determined by librarians rather than by those educators

¹ Steiner, *The legal status of the public library in the United States*. *American Law Review*, 43: 536-46 (1909).

who are in a position to judge where the use of books fits into the whole scheme of education. Under such circumstances, educational authorities are inclined to ignore or underrate results which they can neither measure nor direct, especially when they relate to children. Both educational guardians of the child, the public library and the public school, claim the right to direct his reading; one because it assumes to know what a child ought to read, and the other because it assumes to know what a child ought to become.

It is important that the book expert and the child expert pool their information and apply it to the development of the child's interest in books. Every individual must learn in childhood how to use books intelligently if the public library is to be the help to him as an adult which the law contemplates. To train every child to avail himself of adult library privileges without interfering with the rest of his education is a matter requiring delicate adjustments. It cannot be accomplished by one institution alone. If the best results for the children can be obtained by having the library managed as an educational department coordinate with the school, the respective opinions or prejudices of librarians or teachers can be only one factor and not the deciding factor in bringing about the change.

Business, government, education, charities, and the churches, are alike effected by the modern demand for consolidation and correlation—the elimination of waste. The public now demands larger returns for a given expenditure of energy and money. Perhaps

the agencies of production and distribution of creature comforts and necessities have felt the necessity for efficiency more urgently than have non-competitive organizations such as schools and libraries. If a manufacturer ignores methods for making his product better or for distributing it at less expense, he loses his market. But if school and library cling to antiquated methods and resist modern demands, the public cannot go to a rival library for service, or, in most cases, to a better school. In general the public has to take whatever service the library chooses to give, for the lay mind is not supposed to be qualified to judge whether it is efficient or not. Librarians themselves largely determine policies and methods; consequently, except in the purely mechanical and technical features of library work, the principles of what has come to be known as scientific management are little known and seldom applied.² Other distributing agencies make experiments, introduce new elements, and bring about consolidations, all of which have one end in view—to increase the use of the article which they have for distribution. Neither does the wide awake producer or distributor trust to his own judgment as to methods. He calls in an expert, who does not necessarily know the particular business but who does know certain principles which are capable of general application.

Whenever progressive librarians have discussed the application of business methods to the adminis-

²It is perhaps significant that in a bibliography on efficiency recently published in *Special Libraries*, there is no reference to libraries.

tration of a public library, there have always been enough reactionaries to oppose what they consider a materialistic view of the mission of a public library. When one ventures to assert that the library is for the practical use of practical people rather than for the literary delectation of the few, he must be prepared to receive attacks from the classicists and intellectual standpatters. The progressive librarian, however, insists that, particularly in the case of children, education for culture must be left to the schools, and that the library's mission to the school child must be subordinated to the school authorities.

The public library is a distributing agency for information; and as an integral part of the public education it is the educational agency for those who have left school and who have no other means of getting information. Many librarians, however, seem to want the library to be an integral part of the educational scheme and at the same time to be independent and separate. There is as much talk of the library as a continuation school and as a part of the educational plant as if it were such in fact. Public libraries can never be considered part of the public educational system until they really are part of it. Usually the library is willing to play at the game of cooperation with the schools if it can dictate the rules and conduct affairs according to library ideas. Although some librarians profess to be optimistic as to the ultimate success of cooperation under these conditions, it seems clear to those who have studied the tendencies in other fields, that in order to be part of the educational system the library must be joined

on at some point. In other words, "There must be between library and school, an organization which will make it possible to decide on common aims with methods that do not defeat one another and with rational agreement as to division of labor."³ It is not a solution of the problem, except in special cases, for the public library to manage school libraries. Until public library assistants are better trained in educational methods and principles, school authorities will continue to doubt the library's ability to conduct school libraries in the best interests of the school.

Even when there are the friendliest relations between the library and the school under separate management, "nevertheless the library and the librarian are not really accepted as belonging to the school and its work. The librarian does not attend teachers' meetings. In considerable measure the teachers regard the librarian as an outsider and she regards herself in the same way. . . . Library and librarian are incidental and not integral parts of the school and its work."⁴ This is said of a city where the co-operation between library and school has reached a high degree of usefulness.

A striking example of the consequences of wasted money effort and energy is presented by the conditions in New York City. "It is less than a score of years ago," says a prominent librarian,⁵ "that this great city began the establishment of a modern library system.

³ Shute, *Teaching of English in the elementary schools*. *School Review*, 10: 332-50 (1902).

⁴ Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 32 (1916).

⁵ Johnston, *The school librarian*. *Minnesota public library commission, Notes and News*, 4: no. 9: 157-60 (1915).

It has so far been able only to establish a central library and branch libraries side by side with the schools but entirely separate from them. It has not been able to make them a part of the educational organization of the city." The public library has eighty-eight branches and nearly a million volumes for circulation, and the board of education libraries which circulate from the schools contain nearly two million volumes. After commenting on the cost of the new branches, Dr. Howe in his study of the uses of the school plant, says, "A large part of this cost could have been saved had the school and the branch library been housed under the same roof. In addition, the branch libraries are not united with the schools as they should be, for the libraries ought to be a closely integrated agency of education. Were the branch library within the school the child would come to the library when he comes to school. He would learn to use it while young. During the hours when not reciting he could be in the library. Study would be enriched and diversified by the use of periodicals and reference books. This is especially true in the high schools. But, even in the elementary school, the child would be brought in contact with literature during his most formative age; with literature far more attractive than the average text book. Art exhibits could be held in the library, as is now the practice to a limited extent, while the many story-telling and other activities which the libraries have assumed would provide a place for the children after school hours. There would be a saving in books, in space,

in employees, in time as well as in building costs and maintenance charges.

"Such an arrangement would also bring the library much closer to the people. By the use of printed slips containing lists of current books, children would deliver books to parents too exhausted or unfamiliar with the library to make use of it.

"No cultural institution in America has widened its activities in a more democratic way than has the public library. And were it housed under a common roof with the school, and its work correlated with that of education, the efficiency of both agencies would be greatly increased."

Wherever studies of the supply of books to school children are made by educational experts, who see the problem as an educational and not a library problem merely, the same conclusions are reached: "It is not good management to erect within a few hundred feet of each other two costly public buildings with two auditoriums, two heating systems, and two sets of janitors and caretakers and proceed to give the children part of their education in the first building, and then close it while the children go to the second building to enjoy further advantages, requiring in large measure the same sort of equipment." Even when there are two boards, "they should consider building the branch libraries and schools together or close to each other, so that the library can carry on its valuable extension work without duplicating

* Report on the economic utilization of the public school plant . . . in New York City. Committee on school inquiry of the board of estimate and apportionment. Report, 3: 432 et seq. (1913).

equipment." It certainly is only common sense to assert that "it is probably a better policy to take books where a big majority of the children are, than to hope to lure a less number to the branch library where the books are."⁷ Most educational authorities feel that this is a thoroughly practicable scheme only when the library and school systems are under a single board or commissioner, or have an organic relation which takes the place of such a union. Librarians object to any form of consolidation, whether with the schools, under the same board, or under a commissioner who manages both library and schools. Most of these objections have not been expressed in a way to convince municipal experts or educators, from whose point of view education should be a unit, and who look upon the problems of government from a somewhat broader standpoint than is possible to the average librarian. If the library has been treated as subordinate, it is chiefly because it has often been a subordinate influence.

That the public library will be compelled to submit to the same overhauling that other branches of city administration are undergoing, there is already some evidence. School authorities and librarians have always held that their services to the community could not be measured by any ordinary standards. Yet in New York City a school survey has been made, which to be sure the school authorities did not altogether enjoy; a state wide survey of schools has

⁷ Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 48, 49, 64 (1916).

been conducted in Ohio; and the reports of the United States commissioner of education lists increasing numbers of school surveys. In Wisconsin there has been an attempt to fit library accounting into a proposed system of municipal accounts. The United States census bureau regularly reports financial statistics of libraries as of other city departments.

All these activities seem to be groping attempts actually to unite the educational services of a city. That they were ever separated, is more or less an "historical accident," as Doctor Schaper shows.*

In Boston the interpretation of the public library as an extension and completion of the free school system greatly strengthened the cause. A library free to all was but a necessary step forward in universal public education—a sort of continuation school. The city through its schools had taught the masses how to read; but had so far failed to supply the necessary books. As a result only the few . . . made an adequate use of their ability to read after their school days were over. So imbued were the fathers of the first public library with the idea that it was a part of the free educational system that in 1852 they requested the ground floor of the Adams school in Mason street, for housing the library.

Doctor Schaper then describes the circumstances which forced the public library control from a committee of councilmen into the hands of a board of trustees appointed by the mayor.

The library having been accidentally placed under trustees, entirely independent of the board of education, the close relation of the public library to the city schools pointed out by the founders was soon lost sight of. . . .

* The place of the public library in the administration of a city. *National Municipal Review*. 3, 676 et seq. (1914).

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The organic relation between the public library and the common school has been a matter of much uncertainty, both as to theory and practice. The librarian is prone to think that although the public library ought to be a part of the educational plant, it should be conducted separately for administrative reasons. Sometimes the library under the board of education has been subordinated to the schools. In such cases the library may never have proved to the community its importance as an educational institution. Undoubtedly many educators as well as the general public tend to think of the public library as recreational rather than educational in character. But taxation for library support is justified as a means of affording opportunity for further study to those no longer able to go to school or college.¹ If the public library is not considered as a continuation school in this sense it may be because librarians generally have not taught educators to look to it for such service. In other words, the duties of a library have been determined by librarians rather than by those educators

¹ Steiner, The legal status of the public library in the United States. *American Law Review*, 43: 536-46 (1909).

be directed from a common center. It would seem almost as sensible to place the large university libraries, many of which are truly public libraries, under a board of trustees, separate from the regents of the university, as to place the city library under a board distinct from the school board.

The appointment of library trustees by the board of education as provided by the statutes of Ohio, or the representation of the school authorities on the library board, in one way or another, as in Indiana and other states, needless to say is not a solution of the question. That there are great difficulties in the way of bringing the public schools and libraries together after many years of complete separation is self evident. That many librarians, accustomed to their present position of almost complete independence, will raise objections is to be expected.

Almost all the more recent activities of the city were originally experimental and were tried out by means of the board system or through private organizations. Gradually these experiments have been taken over and financed by the city. Such is the history of the free public school, the free kindergarten, the free high school, and playgrounds, which were first administered by private or charity societies. There seems no reason for keeping up a form of organization no longer adapted to the growing demands upon educational institutions. If the school and the library are to be made continuous and effective forces in the lives of young people, the gap which now exists between the two must be bridged. The library does not turn out students from the children's rooms, although we hear much of that influence; generally the schools do not succeed in graduating children who know how to get practical help from

books. The ordinary cooperation carried on by teachers and librarians, about which much is written, by no means gets to the root of the difficulty.

Many librarians seem to fear that association with the school board or education committee will inevitably subordinate the library. Anybody entrusted with the control of the two most important educational agencies would be assured of abler and more conscientious members than either the ordinary school or library board. By making the library a separate department, its friends have not saved it from the prevailing political evils. The fact that the importance of the library is not generally recognized is likely to make the appointing authority careless as to the membership of the board, and any power of appointment is certain to be used sooner or later for political purposes.⁹ The election of members of school or library boards is not to be thought of. Politics and wirepulling are quite as characteristic of a small board composed of eminently respectable citizens as of the city council, and, unlike the council, the board is not so easily reached by public opinions, demands, or needs. The influences which we commonly describe as political are not removed by a change in the form of organization designed "to take the library out of politics." Persons chosen for social or business standing in the community are not necessarily qualified to direct such an institution as the public library. There are few public libraries

⁹In Chicago, the mayor, in 1913, appointed to vacancies on the library board, one member as a representative of the G. A. R. and one recommended by the Polish organizations.

which do not have staff members who are retained for reasons other than fitness.

Not only are leading citizens susceptible to "influence," but they are often quite as ignorant of library aims as the alderman to whom they feel superior. In one town of 20,000 population not one of the original library board had ever been in a public library, although they were supposed to be the educated men of the town. When the eagerness of the people for the books had almost emptied the shelves of the newly opened library, one of the members of this board felt greatly disturbed at the appearance of the empty shelves and remarked that it was not his idea of a library at all. In a smaller town, the head of the library board is a man who has never finished the graded schools and who objects to the presence of children in the library, because of the fear that they may introduce a disturbing element into the peaceful atmosphere.

Pride in the public school is characteristic of every American community, and although a separate school board has not taken the schools out of politics, it is likely to have more competent members than a library board. The main thing to be desired for a school or a sewer system is to have an expert in charge, as is the custom in England and on the continent. If this could become the practice, it would make little difference whether schools and libraries were both run by a committee of councils, a commissioner, or a separate board, for the absurdity of the idea of appointing anybody but thoroughly trained persons

as teachers and librarians would be apparent. Under present conditions it is possible for members of boards to obtain appointments of school principals or librarians for personal or political reasons.

School and library administration, have become matters for the expert. A board of railroad directors would not be likely to appoint a man to the head of a railroad for personal reasons, for they are responsible to stock holders for measurable results. More important than the form of organization by which schools or libraries are directed, is the insistence upon the same principle in their management, and upon the responsibility of board members or councilmen to taxpayers as stockholders in the public corporation. There is nothing about public education that makes it necessary to administer it differently from other governmental undertakings. To call directors by different names, or to have them appointed in different ways will not correct defects in administration which have become characteristic of American local institutions. The reformers who have advocated and pushed through a new form of municipal organization which works smoothly and independently of the gang for a season or until they find out how to manipulate it, have learned this to their cost. Some of the younger reformers are still enthusiastic over forms of organization, but on the whole the emphasis has been changed from form to methods. When the public has learned to demand efficient management all the year round instead of a new form of organization every few years, the library will be safe

even under the directorship of an aldermanic committee,—quite as safe as some librarians imagine it to be under a board.

The administration of the schools has reached a considerable degree of efficiency. School affairs usually command the liveliest interest on the part of citizens, and the consequent discussion within and without the educational field creates a healthy condition. Methods, curricula, and educational ideas of all sorts are constantly subjected to criticism and suggestion from educational authorities as well as the layman. This may not be pleasant for those who run the schools, but it is one reason for the fact that education is very much alive—a changing, growing force. In the library world there is little of this controversial spirit and consequent breadth of view. The public knows too little what to expect of a library, and the members of the profession sometimes seem to think that all library problems are in the way of being solved. Nothing so well illustrates this difference as the printed proceedings of the American library association and the National education association. If the public library were to become a part of the educational system, it would get the benefit of many conflicting ideas—often the ideas of those who have devoted their lives not to the consideration of public schools alone, but to education as a whole. There would be some hope of a continuous organization which would make the library a real continuation school.

Librarians might well leave the “culture,” and the

development of the literary tastes of school children to other institutions better equipped to furnish such training, and give their attention to these matters of administration and organization which effect so vitally the school children and young people. It is no easy task properly to approach and hold the interest of adolescent children, and so far the library has tried to do it chiefly through their literary interests. When the public library has proved itself worthy, it will be proud to be included in the school system, which with all its relics of medieval ideas, is nevertheless regarded by our foreign critics as proof of the sincerity of our democracy.

In a paper prepared for the meeting of the council of the American library association, January, 1912, Mr. W. L. Brown suggested as a remedy for the present lack of coordination and the consequent waste in library and school administration, an educational commission upon which representatives of each institution should serve, as well as one or two persons not technically trained but public spirited and broadly educated. The librarian would be employed as an expert administrator by the commission, which should be informed as to the standards of library efficiency. If there are no generally recognized standards, the commission could take steps to establish them. The librarian who served the public through a body of this kind would need executive ability rather than literary qualifications. The new charter of St. Paul provides that the librarian be appointed and controlled by the commissioner of education. One sec-

tion of the charter further provides for an advisory library board, which shall be composed of "twelve residents of St. Paul properly qualified for the place, one from each ward, to serve a term of two years. Such persons, so appointed, in association with the superintendent of the St. Paul schools, the principals of the high schools in the city, and a teacher elected by the whole body of teachers in the St. Paul schools in such a manner as the council may direct, shall act as an advisory library board." This body will meet with the commissioner of education at least once a month to make recommendations for "new books, papers, and periodicals for the library," and to make suggestions for the library's increased usefulness to the public. The new Minneapolis charter proposes a union of public schools and public libraries under one board with separate budgets.

Nor is this plan of closer organic relations between school and library merely the dream of a reformer. On account of lack of funds, the libraries committee in Halifax was merged with the education committee of councils and the juvenile libraries were removed to the elementary schools. Each pupil on leaving school now receives a card of membership in the central library. A large number of new readers for the library have been obtained in this manner. The work in connection with the school libraries is done in the library, but all the expense is borne by the educational committee.

Municipal government in England is notably more efficient than our own, and the variation between

methods of control in the different towns is not so great as in the United States. The free schools are administered by an educational committee of the city council, or in some instances by an enlarged school board directly responsible to council, with sub-committees controlling technical schools, museums, and libraries, respectively. This board may consist partly of elected members and partly of experts. Free library funds in England are limited by the low tax rate permitted for library purposes, which may explain the beginning of the administration of libraries for school children by the educational authorities.

When there is a separate libraries committee it has sometimes, in consultation with the education committee, appointed a sub-committee as advisors in charge of school libraries. Experience has proved that friction has been the result. The most satisfactory results have come from a joint "school libraries committee," the membership of which is drawn in equal numbers from the education committee and the libraries committee. Such a committee in Cardiff, Wales, also includes three head teachers elected by the head teachers employed under the education committee. The librarian attends all the meetings of this composite committee, and presents a monthly report of the school libraries. Under the direction of their composite committee the librarian and staff buy the books and prepare them for use in the schools. The action of this committee must be approved by a sub-committee composed of the members of the composite committee who are also members of the education

committee, and finally submitted to the education committee itself. This is necessary, because the funds for school libraries are education funds. The money grant is £2 10s. for every hundred pupils in average attendance. This amounts to about \$2,600 annually, most of which can be spent for books, as the service and supervision are furnished by the library.

Children who have access to the school libraries are allowed to take books from the public library, only by special permission from the teacher. An exceptional child can get this permission without difficulty. At the end of his school course, each child receives a membership card in the public library. By this means the school work of the children is certain not to be hindered, and the teachers have full control of the development of the child for which they are held responsible. On the other hand, the library selects the books with regard to the suggestions of the teachers.

The scheme of the school libraries in Cardiff embraces the following groups of books:

1. Books for every classroom in the elementary schools; which allows one book for each pupil.
 2. Libraries for every class room in the secondary schools.
 3. A collection of books for the pupil teachers' school; which provides about three books for each pupil.
 4. A group of books for the school for the blind.
- For use in school only, there are collections of picture books in the oral school for the deaf, and in the

school for defective children, and groups of simple ("easy") books for each class in the infants' school. When the school libraries were started under the present plan, only the first three of these divisions were put in operation, in order that the pupils about to leave school might be reached at once.

The books are usually lent to the children once a week. Teachers are not responsible for loss or damage to the books, but they are requested not to circulate books in need of repairs. Rebinding and mending are undertaken by the library twice yearly; during the Christmas holidays and during the summer vacation. For the first few years the books were changed frequently between schools, but although this seemed a good plan in theory, the teachers found that they could do better work with the same collection, because the pupils move on and the collections gain variety from additions and removals. In his report for 1903, Mr. John Ballinger, the librarian, gave the following reasons for making the collections permanent: "I think the teachers would take more care of and more interest in a permanent as compared with a temporary library. For instance, if under existing arrangements a teacher recommends the committee to make purchases of books suitable for his own school, supposing the books are added, he can only have the use of them for a short time, and then they would be removed to another school. I think the fact that we have had so few suggestions from the teachers may be partly owing to this. Again, it would be possible for the teachers to become better

acquainted with the books under their care, and they would be able to advise and direct the children's reading to better advantage. Another gain would be that it would be possible to confine the selection to the very best books if each section were self contained. Under the existing system, in order to vary the sections, it is necessary to include some books which are only moderately good, and which under the revised system would be rejected."

Ten years after the first books were issued from the school libraries in Cardiff, Mr. Ballinger reported that more intelligent readers had been secured than when the school children made their own selections from the public library. This statement of experience is worth more than tons of glittering generalities as to what a children's room accomplishes. Children have been using children's rooms in libraries for about fifteen years, and if such use really does "keep alive the imagination, stock the mind with fine thoughts, noble impulses and practical suggestions, and instil a love of good literature," these results should have been apparent long since in the better use of the public library by those who have graduated from the children's room. What is needed is not a glowing and vague promise as to what public library reading will do for children, but a survey of the facts which will show some actual examples of what it has done in individual cases.

Mr. Ballinger has given some other results of the Cardiff plan: (1) There was no longer any over-

lapping of the two sources of the children's reading supply; (2) the power to use the public library when desirable was consistently developed; (3) technically minded children were sent to the public library when the school supply failed to meet their needs; (4) undue pressure on the juvenile department of the public library was relieved and more time could be devoted to the children who had left school; (5) as much reading as could be assimilated by the child during his school life was provided and *no more*; (6) reading was controlled by the persons closest to the children, who were in a position to judge what books they should have and when they should have them.

Since every child who leaves school receives a form to be presented at the library for membership, the public library in Cardiff becomes in effect a continuation school, without elaborate or expensive machinery. The simplicity of the plan makes it extraordinarily effective. Mr. Harry Farr, the present librarian, reports that while the library does not hold all the adolescent children, many are retained. The figures of circulation in a recent report confirm this statement. In spite of the fact that school children do not use the public library branches, the issue of juvenile literature from all the branches during the year was nearly 60,000; and from the children's halls 20,000. In this country there are few instances of real organic control, and many varieties of organic relationship. The latter, however, do not afford a

solution of the difficulty, although they do indicate the way in which the union may be worked out.³⁰ The Kansas City (Mo.) school district maintains the public library as part of the educational system and all school buildings have library rooms. The new high school buildings contain regular public library branches. The Indianapolis library and schools are controlled by the same board. Each school building has a boy or girl librarian, and for class rooms a sub-librarian, who reports to the librarian of the school. These children pack and unpack the books for the class rooms as they are received from the main library. The public school library of Columbus is open to the general public, but is supported by the board of education. Libraries in the schools are maintained as branches. The permanent collections belong to the main library, but they are left in school buildings, and there is a constantly changing collection of other books. There is a special supplementary reading department in the library to which no additions are made except on the advice of teachers and superintendent. California school libraries are legally required to be open to all members of the pupils' families living within the district. The high school libraries of Newark, Passaic, Cleveland, and Portland (Ore.) are branches of the public library. In Newark, the high school librarian is appointed and paid by the board of education, but is under the supervision of the public li-

³⁰ The drawbacks and advantages of the union in the case of the high school library, the elementary school library, and the children's room are considered somewhat in detail in the chapters on those respective subjects.

brary. The English teachers of the Cleveland high schools serve as librarians, and as such are under the supervision of the public library. The librarian of the normal school in Cleveland is a member of the staff of the public library and a member of the faculty of the normal school. She is responsible to the supervisor of grade school libraries for the conduct of the library, and to the principal of the school for the instruction which she gives in the use of books and children's literature. Her salary is shared by the board of education and the library board. Although under separate boards, the "library has become an integral part of the school. It is no sense merely incidental. . . . This arrangement has been so developed administratively that it works without a hitch."¹¹ The joint organic control is not so effective in the other school libraries and the report of the Cleveland foundation survey suggests that a corps of teacher librarians be established who should have teaching experience, and library school training. They should be certified as librarians and nominated by the library board and be certified as teachers and appointed by the board of education. They should have a special supervisor who should be appointed and paid by the same joint arrangement. When there are two boards this seems to be the most effective and practical way of managing the library work in the schools.

The salary of the school librarian in Madison

¹¹ Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 68, 72 (1916).

(Wis.) is paid by the public library. Saginaw has two school libraries under the board of education, one of 12,000, the other of 15,000 volumes, both of which are also public libraries. A West Virginia school law of 1908 provides that school libraries of over one hundred volumes shall be open after school hours to the district, upon petition of one half the taxpayers and under regulations prescribed by the trustees of the schools. The Detroit board of education has a contract with the library board under the terms of which the library furnishes books to the schools, which are held responsible for their care, although the library repairs them at stated intervals. The school authorities provide the boxes for transportation. The library keeps a collection of 18,000 volumes, from which 750 class room libraries are supplied; and books for reference use are sent to three high schools. In Passaic the board of education contributes toward the salary of a library assistant who administers the school libraries, while the public library furnishes supervision, and buys annually \$300 worth of books for school use. In this case the teachers send to the library lists of the books they want.

Until 1903 the Grand Rapids public library was managed by a committee of the board of education. Since that time the superintendent of schools has been a member of the library board, and in 1906 the school board agreed to equip a room in every new school house for library purposes. There are at least six branch libraries in school buildings. The library

furnishes books, periodicals, and catalogues, and conducts story hours. At Galesburg, the board of education employs a teacher whose business it is to take charge of the juvenile department of the public library. She is a trained teacher and a trained librarian. The office of the superintendent of schools is in the library building.

A Wisconsin law of 1911 provides that the superintendent of schools must be a member of every local library board. In Elizabeth distributing centers for books have been opened in school houses. The expenses of books, service, and equipment is borne by the public library, and heat, light, and a suitable room are furnished by the board of education. The school board in Houston gives an allowance to the public library for keeping up sets of supplementary reading.

For the small town the plan of joint operation and control has many advantages of an eminently practical nature. In describing the system used in two towns in Minnesota of 2,400 and 1,600 population respectively, the superintendent of schools in the larger town expressed himself as well satisfied with the results.¹³ The school provides a room in the main building of each town for a library. This room is somewhat larger than a regular classroom. It opens directly on the street, and has an entrance also to the school corridor. The school provides and furnishes the room, supplies heat, light, janitor service, and pays the salary of the librarian. The town pays for books and period-

¹³ Gilruth, Public library in the school. . . . Minnesota public library commission. Notes and News. 4: no. 9: 160-1 (1915).

icals, which remain its property. The rooms are open both afternoons and evenings, including Sundays for the full twelve months. It is suggested as essential to the successful working of such a plan that the room must be in a centrally located building; that it must have a separate entrance, which can be used when the rest of the building is closed; that it be twice as large as an ordinary class room; and that there be separately controlled heat mains and special arrangements for ventilation. This last proposal might not be necessary, considering the increasing all-year-round use of the school plant.

Given these conditions, the advantages of the plan in the matter of economy and efficiency of service have worked out as follows: In the matter of construction, "ample room can be provided in the ordinary school building at a cost much less than required for a separate library building. . . . Compared with separate buildings offering equal accommodations, a saving of at least 75 per cent of the initial investment will be apparent." The increased economy in operation is evident when the library is a unit "in the educational system, with janitor service, fuel, telephone, etc., in common. . . . All books being in the one place, the unnecessary cost of duplicates is saved. Interest on money invested in a satisfactory separate building valued at \$24,000, amounts to \$800 a year at 4 per cent, a saving of \$560 annually for purchase of books." In a large system the saving would be proportionately larger.

With such a room located in a school building, it

will be "easy to get the children interested and the library habit for research and systematic reading can be readily developed. The librarian will come to know the teachers and their work and the teachers in turn will make use of the library for personal and class room use far more because of the accessibility." The plan also "brings the methods of a trained librarian into the school reference work and general reading of the pupils." When the librarian's salary is shared by school and library, a better trained and higher type of worker can be secured. It will be noticed further that the library is open to the public longer hours than is possible in the ordinary small town.

Much the same are the conclusions of Superintendent Wirt of Gary as to the practical results of the library in school buildings and particularly in regard to elementary schools. In a school branch of the public library Mr. Wirt finds that "library maintenance and circulation cost per book circulation is only about 5 per cent of the cost in the main library, while the life of the book . . . under the control of the teachers is ten times that of the usual circulation book in the library. In both the Emerson and Froebel schools there is a branch of the public library, under a library assistant. Children use the library as a part of their regular work under the supervision of the assistant and teachers. . . . The library becomes the storehouse of the knowledge of the school and the children learn to recognize it as such. . . . Like most of the features of the Wirt plan, this consolidation of gallery, museum, and li-

brary in the school is as economically efficient as it is educationally valuable."¹⁸ The library has a special significance in these schools, because so much of the studying is done, even in the grades, by the seminar and departmental method. This means that each subject is taught in a special room fitted up with the laboratory and library material necessary. Many of the literature classes are assigned to the library, as the natural place for such study.

We have been mainly concerned with the relation of school and library in town or city. There remains for consideration the welfare of the children who do not live in town or city and who are affected by the coordination or lack of it between the state educational and library authorities. Lack of correlation between the two or more educational agencies in the state is only one of many conditions which are preventing country children from getting the reading that they need. The lack of centralization of responsibility in educational administration has had unfortunate results upon the schooling of rural children, and the same condition in library affairs has deprived them of books which might add not only to their enjoyment of the country as a place in which to live, but also to their ability to prepare themselves for the work they are best fitted to do.

The connection between the state educational system and the library commission is in most states slight, and takes the form of a commission which has for members the state librarian, the superintendent-

¹⁸ Bourne, *The Gary schools*, 25-6 (1916).

ent of public instruction, and often the chancellor or president of the state university. The gymnasium commission of Utah appointed by the state board of education, serves under the state library board as the state library commission. In Connecticut, the public library committee is appointed by the state board of education. School libraries in Connecticut receive a grant from the state and they are permitted to buy books through the committee. The traveling libraries of Idaho are under the department of public instruction; and the school libraries of Minnesota are supervised by a librarian under the department of public instruction. The public library commission in Oregon is authorized by law to buy books for all the school libraries in the state. Funds for this purpose are raised by a tax of ten cents for each child of school age in the district, and the county superintendent is directed to notify the commission of the amount allowed for each district. The commission has compiled a list of books for school libraries, and all books are bought from this list and through the commission. Library extension work in New York is conducted through the New York state educational department.

Six weeks' courses in library methods are given at the summer schools of the state universities of Washington, North Carolina, Iowa, Missouri and Minnesota. The state library commission gives the library course at the three normal schools in Michigan, and a course of about ninety lectures is given at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana. The library school

of the University of Wisconsin is an outgrowth of the library commission's school of instruction. "During the freshman and sophomore years, students in the university follow the usual college courses, electing those calculated to make the best foundation for library work; at the end of the sophomore year they take the entrance examinations of the Library School. If they are admitted to the Library School, the University in recognition of the school's standards of scholarship, grants twenty hours (five hours each semester) of credit toward the A. B. degree for work done in the Library School during the junior and senior years." Other commissions have given courses for one year or perhaps two at normal schools or the state university.

In educational affairs, central authorities are assuming more importance, because the only way to insure efficiency and to give the taxpayer his money's worth, is to have each piece of governmental and educational machinery produce what it is meant to produce without doing the work of another kind of machine. There seems reason to hope that other states may follow the example of New York and make the public library activities of the state in reality an integral part of the public education.

In this connection the school code in Professor Cubberly's "State of Osceola" presents a plan for educational reorganization which includes the library. The public library is recognized as an important adjunct of the school. The state library is made one

¹⁴ League of library commissions, Handbook, 1910, 96.

of the branches or bureaus of the state board of education. The county is the unit of administration, and every county school has a branch library. All such schools outside incorporated cities come under the county board of education, which directs the library, and appoints a county librarian who must have a state certificate and be nominated by the county superintendent of education. Branch librarians must also hold state library certificates. One county library is to be established in each county, and provision is made for a branch library in each community center. The school libraries are made a part of the county library system, and the purchase and distribution of books is intrusted to the county library, which in turn is controlled by the county board of education. In cities the library is placed under the city board of education.¹⁸

¹⁸ Cubberly, State and county educational reorganization. 1914.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE CHILDREN'S ROOM

If the public has not yet learned what to expect of the public library as an agency of public service, still less does anyone—even the librarian—know the exact status of the children's room as an educational factor. We are told that "any modern educational theory which does not rest back upon the basis of social and economic needs is sterile and unscientific."¹ In considering the place of the children's room in the public library as now administered, it is pertinent to raise the following questions: (1) Does the children's room as an educational factor "rest back upon some social and economic need?" (2) Is it conducted according to psychological principles? (3) Is there a definite idea of the ends to be served by the separate department? and (4) Is there an approximately accurate measure of accomplishment? These are the questions which will be asked by an informed public. Aside from the claims as to the beneficent results of the children's rooms, mostly based on statistics or vague general statements neither of which prove anything to the point, few librarians have attempted to answer these questions. The need for study of the question has been recognized by Doctor Bostwick who

¹ Carlton, *Educational and industrial evolution*. 8 (1908).

says: "We need to focus our attention at present on the organization and administration of a children's department, especially where it interlocks with other departments. The study of this matter should not be entrusted to children's librarians alone, for standardization work involving more than one department should not be *ex parte*."²

At the time that conscientious school teachers began to concern themselves about the outside reading of their pupils, librarians also discovered that children were reading much that seemed harmful. So long as public libraries did not admit children under fourteen or sixteen as the case might be; so long as the schools had not yet succeeded in reforming their own methods of teaching literature, there was some reason for concern about the undirected reading of the majority of children. Not until the improvement of school reading matter was well under way did the public library let down the bars to young people. Now, besides all the children's rooms, beautifully planned and furnished, there are one or two entire buildings in the United States entirely for children, and designed especially to handle large crowds for a limited period—the working condition of the children's room. One of these is the Brownsville children's branch of the Brooklyn public library, a two-story building which was planned and built especially for the use of children.

² Bostwick, Volume of children's work in the United States. American library association, Proceedings, 1913: 290.

Although librarians and teachers were discussing in identical terms the juvenile reading problem in the early '80's there is no record of any joint conferences, although some were probably held. For the most part, librarians had no confidence in the ability of the school authorities to direct the reading of children; and they seem to have thought that no efforts were being made in the schools to present to children the joys of reading. Apparently they were unaware of the newer spirit working in the schools for that individual development of each child which they felt the library could give so well in the children's room. Of course the children's room was not established to counteract the influence of the school room. But after it had become a success so far as numbers were concerned, the enthusiasts contrasted its appearance of freedom and the attractive appearance of its books with the confinement of the school room with its unattractive text books, and a feeling of superiority came over the spirit of many children's librarians.

On the other hand the public schools were going through a storm and stress period of changing methods. Text books were being improved and other books were being introduced as supplementary reading. The teachers had to adapt themselves to these changes, and they had neither leisure nor energy to study library methods. Whether it was the librarian's assumed superiority or the teacher's indifference that prevented joint consultations is immaterial. Librarians are now trying to establish those friendly rela-

tions with the schools which should have been the most important factor in such an experiment as the children's room.

In some cases the separate children's department in the public library came into being largely as a matter of expediency. A few libraries which happened to have librarians specially interested in children, such as Hartford, Cleveland, Worcester, St. Louis, and Pawtucket, had done effective work with children either through the schools or in the libraries long before the first children's room was opened. When the age limit had been lowered to include all children who could read, the younger children began to come to the public library in large numbers. In many libraries, juvenile fiction was kept on separate shelves, but the other books were left among the adult collections. This meant that the children got in the way of older people and annoyed them by their whispering and restlessness. There was urgent need for a place where they could rustle and murmur by themselves. Furthermore, the necessity for special supervision and a special collection of books soon became everywhere apparent. Pleas in behalf of the separate department were made before the American library association, and those pioneers who were in a position to carry out their ideas set aside a corner or a room for the children in their own libraries before the rest of the profession was awakened or convinced. It is important to note, however, that all the arguments for the cultural values of children's reading had already

been made by educators and school teachers before they were repeated by the librarians.

The school authorities in their study of children's reading had already found difficulty in getting the right kind of books. All the resources of psychology and observation at first hand were at the command of those educators who made the selection of proper and useful books for young people their special concern. The material chosen for use in the schools was intended as an aid in the cultural tasks of education. Books were not only to supplement lessons, but also to contribute to the child's joy of living. Miss Mary E. Burt's *Literary Landmarks* appeared in 1889, and in 1896 Dr. G. Stanley Hall published his *Reading and How to Teach It*. George E. Hardy, a public school teacher of New York City, published a list of books for the young in 1892. With the exception of Miss C. M. Hewin's *Books for the Young* (1882) and Mr. John F. Sargent's *Reading for the Young* (1890) most of the early lists were compiled by teachers. Many papers were read before the national education association on the same subject. This material formed a basis upon which the library study of books for children could proceed, because the aims of the school to give pupils interesting reading matter were the same as those of the library, and the teachers had had more experience with children.

Many of the early children's books, such as those of Alger, "Oliver Optic," and Martha Finley, were gradually eliminated from the progressive libraries,

and the books chosen to take their places were chiefly, (1) childhood favorites of librarians; (2) books which possessed high literary merit; and (3) those which seemed to represent, so far as the librarian knew, what children liked. From these collections children were supposed to be able to choose those books which would add to their enjoyment and furnish the spiritual nourishment they needed. This, of course was the declared aim of the school as well; only the educational authorities assumed that they knew better than the child what he needed for his development. It would seem, therefore, that the separate department for children in the public library did not meet an educational need for which there was no other provision.

Much has been claimed for the children's room as a recreational agency which may help to keep children off the streets and out of mischief. With the increasing use of the school as a social center, however, the children will be able to indulge their desire for activity after school hours. Probably this will be more wholesome than to spend time in a close room where hundreds of little bodies have made the air poison to breathe.

In a room which at the most is only twice as large as the ordinary school room there are often gathered three or four times as many children as the class room ever holds. The ventilating systems of libraries are not so perfect that the children's room under such conditions is a preeminently healthful place in which to spend the hours of recreation. If the children

take the books home, the result is often not much better. Many homes to which children carry public library books are neither properly ventilated nor lighted. It is a question whether any reading after school hours is necessary or desirable for young children. In many schools children are discouraged from taking books home for study on the ground that they have already used their eyes enough in school. The familiar statement that the children's room furnishes a better environment than the street can mean that it is better only from the librarian's point of view. In New York an effort is being made to turn some streets into playgrounds by diverting traffic during certain hours. Dr. Hall has gone so far as to say that the street is an important factor in the child's education.

The fact that in some libraries appropriations for books are distributed according to the number of books circulated, has been one reason for the undue attention to the issue of books, and has made large figures so desirable for reports that the effects of indiscriminate reading on the part of young children have not been investigated. In establishing a standard by which to measure the educational accomplishment of the room, statistics of circulation must be ignored. The number of books taken home by the children may and frequently does becloud the issue, which is related to the actual progress the children make in an intelligent use of books. One might as well try to judge the effects of a motion picture show by the number of children who go in at the door.

No library can follow up the child reader in his

selection even to the extent of knowing the number and kind of books he has taken out during the year. Although he may choose innocuous books, he is by no means certain to get what he himself wants or what he needs. In the school, individual progress can be more or less accurately tested, and deficiencies corrected.

There are children's rooms where children are served a few at a time and under such conditions that the librarian may come to know each child intimately and keep watch over his reading. But in the branches of large city libraries, the room is usually open to children on week days from 3:30 to 6 P. M. During this time several hundred children must go into the room, find books, and go out again; all with a minimum of noise and disorder. Consequently the children form in line to enter the room, form another line to have their books charged as they go out, and those who want fairy tales often form still another line. Those outside want to get in as soon as possible; for they know from experience that the most desirable books will be gone if they do not. The assistants at the desk also feel the necessity for haste. The assistant who is trying to help the children find books, knows that they must be out of the room by a certain time, and she cannot possibly find out the real needs of each child, because that would necessitate knowing his school record and the kind of books he has had before. Compare this with the plan used in Gary, Indiana, and already referred to, where the child has the entire attention of a special literature teacher, for half an

hour every day, and where he may visit at stated intervals during the day a branch library in his school building, which need never be crowded.

In most libraries, as has been shown, the younger children tend to crowd out the older ones. Any child who can read and write his name is generally admitted to membership. These younger children, most of them pupils in the public schools, receive a large share of the attention of the children's librarian, who is better equipped to deal with them than with older children. Half grown boys and girls do not care to go into a room crowded with small children, especially if it has a kindergarten appearance. Librarians find such children a problem. Says the report of the Cleveland public library for 1913: "A great many boys between the ages of fourteen and eighteen use this [branch] library. A number of them are older in body than in mind, their mental development not having kept pace with their physical development. They are too old and too big to sit in the children's room, and they are not ready to be thrown on their own resources in an adult collection of books." Such a situation may have two results. The younger children, who probably ought not to be doing so much reading, are attracted deliberately, and the older children out of school are inadequately served. To be sure, a few books, mostly novels, are sometimes shelved in a separate place in the children's room under a sign "For older boys and girls." Instead of a few shelves, these older boys and girls ought to have the largest space in the library and the chief attention of the librarian. When school

children use the library, says Doctor Bostwick, their use of it should be "directly contributory to the best use of their school privilege."⁸ He adds that this is the exception rather than the rule in the practice of children's rooms.

Librarians admit that the public library is not conducted for school children but they contend that only those children who have become familiar with the library can be expected to use it continuously as they grow older. The truth of this contention has never been proved. The children's room, with its special supervision of the young reader, was intended to develop discrimination in the selection of books and to lead to a wise use of the main library. Most rooms have at least one library attendant and the larger rooms several, who know children's books; but, owing to the peculiar demands of the work in a busy children's library, individual supervision is not possible and the valuable specialized knowledge is sadly ineffective. Although the separate department has been maintained by libraries for over fifteen years, there is little evidence that the graduates of the room have learned to read with discrimination or that they are making better use of the adult department than other readers. The book selection of the children's library is usually superlatively good; the attendants are often well trained and know books, but the methods made necessary by an after school "rush" constitute a very serious defect of the work, a defect impossible to overcome if the children's room is to remain separated

⁸ Bostwick, *The American public library*, 105 (1910).

from the school. That librarians have not yet come to realize these facts is evident from the fact that they are often proud of the crowds and consider them a sign of a successful children's room.

This crowded condition when it exists in school libraries, and for the same reasons, has been well characterized by educational experts: "The regulations which make it necessary for most children wishing to draw books to do so at noon or after school result in great numbers of children going to the libraries at these periods. As a consequence the librarian has little opportunity to get acquainted with the children and to direct their reading. In three of the libraries [examined] an average of only a little over half a minute is spent in giving out each book, while in two of them the average time is only a little over a minute. Little individual work can be accomplished under these conditions. . . . The librarians' . . . efforts would be far more effective if conditions did not require them to hurry so much when the children are getting their books. It is not enough for the library to get books to children. If the reading of these young people is to gain in breadth and richness, it must be directed, encouraged and supplemented. The librarian cannot do this unless she knows something of the tastes and characteristics of the child, and this knowledge cannot be gained in the half minute that a pupil is present borrowing the book."⁴ In the Passaic high school libraries the student writes on his own card the name of the book he is drawing. These cards enable the

⁴ Ayres and McKinnie, *The public library and the public schools*, 28-30 (1916).

librarian or teacher to follow each individual's reading. Such a system presupposes some leisure, and would be possible only under the conditions of a library conducted as part of the school curriculum where rush hours would be eliminated. The teacher or teacher-librarian has opportunity to follow up the children's reading in other ways. The senior teacher-librarians of the Geneseo normal school are put in charge of the library hour during their practice work, and they try at that time to learn something of the children's outside reading, how they happened to read certain books, whether they have books at home, whether they take books from the public library, what books they have re-read, and whether there is reading aloud at home important information which the average children's librarian has not time to obtain.

Children cannot tell from hasty examination the books which they will like best; much less have they any intuition as to those which would not only interest them, but also improve their taste. Yet free access to the shelves in the children's room is considered as one of its advantages compared to the school.

It is doubtful whether the children's room accomplishes those results in relation to character and spirituality of which children's librarians have written so confidently.

As has been shown, on account of its limited hours, the children's room is likely to be crowded, and there are certain psychological effects of crowding which are apparent in its work. Many of the features of the work are so appealing and attractive, that one hesitates to suggest that children, like sheep, follow the

crowd; that they stop taking "liberries" because their best friend stops and take books for equally trivial reasons;⁵ that they are likely to accept anything they can get for nothing; that they choose books for the color of their covers, their size, their pictures, their print; and that they read the first twenty pages of many books and then come back for others.

Perhaps the psychological aspects of the room in its effect on the adults who see it and upon the children's librarian are also worth more intensive study. It is almost impossible to convince those to whom the small chairs, the attractive pictures, and the intent faces of the children reading at the low tables, make an artistic and sentimental appeal, that the children's room for younger children is not its own excuse for being. Educators and others who are more familiar with the ways of children than the average librarian, have said that the intensity of the child's interest does not necessarily mean that he is getting any lasting impressions or helpful development. So pleasing are the rows of eager faces and the shining eyes of the children at a story hour, that the story-teller is likely to feel that some virtue has departed out of herself and into the children. The influence of what we do ourselves is greater than what we passively receive from others, and it is likely that the story teller gets more than do the children out of her entertainment.

The effect upon adults of anything which concerns

⁵ Careful investigation by a candid-minded librarian would reveal many children who like the dirty books best, because that shows they have been popular; who always want a red book, because one they happened to like had a red cover; who want books of a size to fit the other books they happen to be carrying; and who, for reasons of eyesight choose books with large print.

children is very noticeable in American art and literature. Some one makes a picture of a child curled up in a window seat reading a book, and many persons are pleased. Such pictures and stories are made for the susceptible adult. The child in the picture might be much better off if he were out of doors, but the sight of a child in conjunction with a book deprives some people of their power to form unbiased judgments. If artistic picture books appeal to adults, they assume that they are not only attractive to children but educational as well, in spite of the fact that children enjoy much more the sketchy drawings that they make themselves.

Mr. Bliss Perry has spoken of this sentimental attitude toward children as one of the most typical aspects of American idealism. Expressed in pictures and stories made for adults it probably does no harm to those who care for that sort of art; but when it affects the judgment of those in charge of educational agencies, it can become a serious drawback to work educationally correct.

On the whole, small libraries which are unable to maintain a separate department for children may consider themselves fortunate, for while separation has been more convenient for the library it has not proved entirely beneficial to the children. In Cleveland, several of the smaller branches of the public library are used almost exclusively by children and young people. These branches are usually of one room or two closely connected rooms, and they attract many between the ages of fourteen and eighteen. For the crowded section of a large city, the Cleveland method

is worthy of consideration. It seems to point to some systematic plan which will provide many single rooms in congested districts to relieve pressure on a branch library and to attract half-grown boys and girls.⁶ School buildings might furnish such rooms as an extension of the social center idea. As we have seen, one of the strongest arguments advanced by educational leaders and governmental experts against the separation of library and school is the waste and extravagance involved in having separate buildings for library purposes. The difference in aim between the school library and the children's room in the public library seems to exist only in the mind of the librarian. As one school librarian says, "the school library works primarily to lift, even if slowly, the taste of the youth of today, and those living and striving with him from day to day should be responsible for his mental food."⁷ With the children's library in the school building, the librarian would have a chance to become familiar with school affairs; the teachers could observe library methods; the library work with children would come nearer to reaching a majority of them, under conditions which would make individual supervision possible; and the duplication of effort would be avoided. The fear expressed by some school librarians and educational authorities that the public library work would interfere

⁶ Probably as a consequence of this system, but at any rate worth studying in this connection, the circulation of books to children between the ages of nine and fifteen in Cleveland is 76 per cent of the entire juvenile circulation. In several large cities the juvenile circulation is almost half and sometimes more than half the entire circulation of the library. If this circulation is among school children to any large extent, how far is such a duplication of expenditure justified?

⁷ Breck, *The efficient high school library*. *English Journal*, 5: 18 (1916).

with the school library work is not a practical objection since public libraries are not used to any extent while children are in school—that is the early morning and afternoon hours. When continuation and vocational work becomes a part of every school curriculum, the library in the school building would do much to keep working youth in touch with good and helpful reading. Busy workers are more likely to use books when they are accessible. There would be little danger that a children's library located in a school building would become so widely separated from the schools as at present. Eventually the teacher and librarian would do their respective work with satisfactory adjustments of working relations, the librarian leaving teaching to the teacher and the teacher using the librarian's expert knowledge of books for the best advantage of the children. If the public library is to have any control of such a library system—and there are obvious reasons why such control is impracticable under separate administration of library and schools—the educational qualifications of librarianship would need to be raised so that the librarian would know as much of education and pedagogy as she expects the teacher to know of literature.

Should a trained librarian be employed jointly by the school and library she might supervise pupils' reading and school libraries and also conduct the public library for the few hours a week that a small town can afford.

The class room library would no doubt be retained in connection with the children's department of the

branch library located in the school building. The Cleveland public library cannot meet the demands for libraries which come to it from schools. The objection that the children's room in the public school building would not meet the practical needs of parochial school pupils as well as the children's room in a separate branch library, seems to be answered by a recent report of the Cleveland public library which shows that the libraries in school buildings are largely patronized by children from parochial schools.*

In order to hold the older boys and girls the leaders in children's work may find it necessary to break away from some of the methods which have become traditional in the development of children's libraries. Whether school children be reached through the schools and only those who have left school be permitted to use the public library as in Cardiff—whatever may be the solution of the problem presented by the older children—the work of the children's room is now somewhat standardized.

In a large central library of a city's system, the children's department often serves as a reference bureau for teachers, parents, and social workers, who may learn where to get any information in print about children. By recommending editions suitable for gifts to children and advising with teachers as to the best books to use in school, the children's department has a wide influence.

Many libraries have exhibits of approved books during the Christmas season for the inspection of

* Cleveland public library. Report, 1913: 83, 84, 86.

parents and others interested in buying books for children. At least one copy of the editions of children's books well worth preserving because of beautiful workmanship, might be kept as a matter of historical interest. It is obvious that the children's room should be a bureau of information to all adults who wish to know about children's books and reading. The children's librarian is often in demand for talks on books and reading before teachers' associations and mothers' clubs. In Pittsburgh one of the branch libraries conducts a mothers' club; and books suitable for children are discussed at the meetings. On the whole, talks to teachers or to the mothers' clubs of the schools will go further than any ordinary efforts to make the library the centre for such a club.

Just as any well organized business has definite methods of getting customers and keeping in touch with them, the library might well have some means of knowing the names and addresses of children who are leaving school, those who have dropped out, and the reasons why they have done so. The young people who have never used the library at all may be the very ones who could make the greatest use of books. Since it is so important that the older children be attracted to the library, the school authorities should be asked for a list of the pupils as they leave school.* The librarian may be able also to learn from the teacher what particular line of interest each child developed before he left the school.

The aim of the children's room, aside from experi-

* See Chapter Six.

ments, could be more definitely directed toward the help of the young wage-earner and of those children who have left school, whose prospects may be improved by what they can get out of books. This problem is well stated by a thoughtful leader in children's work, who says, "Instead of permanency of book interests extending over the difficult intermediate period, we know that large numbers of those children who leave school before they reach high school age have little or no library contact during their first working years, and we sometimes feel that the interesting experiences with reading working children, which librarians emphasize, give us an impression of a larger number than careful investigation would show. As for quality of reading of the individual working child, we cannot maintain that it is always on a high plane."¹⁰

The children's department has never made a specialty of the needs of working children and young people by keeping a stock of technical periodicals and books, especially those which have to do with local industries. It should have at least one attendant who has had some special training in using such material and so could direct young workers to the adult section of the library where they could best use it. All the information which a library can assemble regarding special phases of industry and manufacturing should be made available. It is not enough for the high school to have material on vocational guidance. The majority of children are going to work before they enter high school; many, before they finish the

¹⁰ Burnite, Values in library work with children. American library association, Bulletin. 7: 282 (1913).

seventh grade. True, many young workers should not be in industry at all, but it is a condition and not a theory which confronts the children's room, and it cannot be ignored. Other agencies are working to keep the children out of industry, but so long as some of them are still at work it is the library's duty to provide for them. In the struggle for existence, the best informed, not the well read, come out ahead.¹¹

In order to make the use of the children's room on the part of the school child more systematic, it might be well to consult both the teacher and parent about every school child before he joins the library. The teacher has a right to pass judgment upon the recreation which may interfere with the child's progress in his lessons, or with the maintenance of proper discipline in school.

To require the signature of a tax payer outside the family for library membership is considered unwise by progressive librarians. In their earnestness to "belong," the children often get the corner grocer or the saloon keeper to sign their cards. In one city of over 100,000 population it is the practice of a druggist whose store is near the library to sign many children's applications. He is something of a philanthropist, for while he has to pay for lost books he continues to sign. In case a child moves or loses a book the teacher can furnish information as to his whereabouts with more certainty than a neighbor who may have signed his application. Care should be

¹¹ For books which will help young people to decide on a vocation, see Davis, *Vocational and moral guidance* (1914).

taken that the teacher's name is given merely by way of identification and not as guarantee for loss or damage. The grade in school and the number or name of the school are also useful in tracing children who have left the neighborhood of the library. In several of the Cleveland public library branches, visits are made to the homes for signatures, overdue books, and fines. This method at once establishes the library and the librarian on a confidential footing with the parents in the interests of the child.

In order to measure the usefulness of the children's room, the reading of each child should be followed up. In the smaller rooms and in the libraries where there is no separate department, the children are so well known that the librarian may know whether a certain child is reading too much or the wrong sort of book. In making such decision she will need to consult the teacher about the child's progress in school, and as to the kind of books that would be useful and helpful in his development. This would not necessarily mean that he would be encouraged to read books relating to his lessons, but it would mean that he would not be able to flit from book to book with no aim except to find exciting incidents.

Such individual work would enforce a new attitude in the library toward statistics of circulation. Librarians have classified children according to types rather than individuals. Thus they have duplicated the error, which they saw in the schools, of treating children in the mass.

Those who supervise children's reading need to

classify the readers as to their eyesight; the kind of reading they do and the kind they might better do; their natural aptitudes; and their relative progress in school. This cannot be done without the cooperation of teachers, parents, and librarians.

When there is strong pressure from the administrative head of the library or from the supervisor of children's rooms for favorable statistics, the children's librarian will naturally strive for large figures of circulation. If the money for new books is apportioned according to these figures, the libraries doing the best work may receive the least encouragement. This leads to cynicism on the part of the conscientious workers. Furthermore, the book collections in the branches are not being built up in a scientific manner, because the branch which started out with a large collection can always circulate more books and so get more books, while a smaller branch may issue many more books in proportion to the size of its collection.

By far the most important service performed by the children's department is the reference work. Every well equipped children's room has a collection of books useful for answering children's questions, most of which are given out by the teachers.¹² The collections in use in the children's room of the New York public library have proved of practical use. They include some of the reference books in use in the adult reference room, special compilations and encyclopedias, and a number of fine editions on reserve which may be examined by all who have clean hands.

¹² See Chapter Six.

The children's reading room is often closed at eight in large city branches, either on account of staff limitations in the evening, or conforming to the polite fiction that it ought to be the children's bed time. When a library is located in a neighborhood where children throng the streets in the evening, it would seem advisable to keep the room open later.

In most large city libraries, the children's departments in the branches are administered by a supervisor of children's work, who is represented in the branch by the children's librarian. The branch organization itself is somewhat recent in the history of library development, and the central supervision of all service to children has introduced another factor in library administration. The inter-relation of the branch system and the supervision of children's rooms in the branches constitutes a more serious problem of organization than seems to be recognized generally by librarians.

There are two common forms of organization; one divisional or functional, the other departmental. These are mutually inconsistent in principle, but in most library systems an attempt has been made to combine them. The branches are usually organized on a departmental basis, each branch librarian having large authority. Certain operative functions, however, which have no direct relation to the service of the public—such as book ordering, cataloguing, and accounting—are performed under the direction of supervisors, whose authority extends throughout the system, thus making it coordinate with dissimilar functions.

Work with children is not an operative function, yet in most libraries it has been intrusted to a supervisor, thus making it coordinate with dissimilar functions. This often results in more or less friction in the conduct of children's work in the branches.¹⁸

When children's libraries had developed to a certain point, the need for their supervision as a separate department of library service became everywhere apparent. If every branch could have a plan of its own for dealing with children, the work would have neither continuity nor unity. The service to school children, especially, needed to be conducted along broad, comprehensive lines that would give school authorities confidence in its stability; confidence they could scarcely have if every branch had different rules for its child patrons, wide differentiation in choice of books, and as many conceptions of educational matters as there were branches. The direct consequences of the lack of a guiding policy would be similar confusion, since in a large city one child might be a member of several branches within a year or two. Here again, difference in policy would mean failure to hold the child by a continuous and consistent process. Such conditions made it obvious that there must be fixed policies in regard to children and their relations to the library.

Every effective organization has a single administrative head who acts through agents immediately responsible to him for the discharge of such duties as

¹⁸ See Bostwick, *Conflicts of jurisdiction in library systems*. *Library Journal*, 39: 588-91 (1914).

may be assigne to them. The agents are simply the extension of the authority and personality of the head. The supervisor of children's work in branch libraries as one of these agents represents the head librarian in all matters relating to children. The branch librarian, nevertheless, may be in more or less independent control of her branch or directly responsible to the head librarian instead of through his agent, the supervisor. The difficulties of making the branch librarians responsible to supervisors of children's rooms have been largely personal. In many cases the branch librarian has had more general library experience than the supervisor, whose training and interest is necessarily specialized. The fact that these difficulties exist, however, is not remedied by a makeshift organization which compromises with the earlier departmental system of control, while trying to establish the functional system. This is poor organization and friction is to be expected where it exists. Whenever it succeeds, it is due to a fortunate combination of personalities and circumstances.

The results of this attempt to join the two systems of organization in the case of children's work have been concretely: (1) To make the supervisor theoretically responsible for all service to children in branches, without giving her enough authority over branch librarians to carry out her plans satisfactorily and to compel cooperation. It is a question how much authority the supervisor has over children who are just admitted or about to be admitted to the adult department and over the books they will read; and

whether her lack of jurisdiction over workers with children in the adult department may not account in some measure for the gap between the children's room and that department. (2) To make the children's librarian directly responsible to the supervisor, although theoretically she is responsible only through the branch librarian. The result is divided responsibility and division of responsibility is inconsistent with effective organization. If the children's room is to be closely related to the work of the adult department in the branch, the children's librarian must be responsible to the branch librarian. Otherwise the room as a feeder for the adult library fails of its purpose, and the children's librarian will feel and generally does feel, that the service to children is an end in itself, to be administered apart from the service to adults. But in the interest of continuity of policy, the supervisor must also be in close contact with the children's librarians, thus dealing directly with the subordinates of another administrator, another characteristic of poor organization (3) To hold the children's librarian responsible for results which she has no authority to accomplish. Assistants from the adult department are sometimes used as helpers in the rush hours of the children's room. These assistants may have little interest in children's work, and as they are not under the authority of the children's librarian, they may do much to disorganize the work. If the children's room is located in the school building, in cities where library and schools are under the same administration, the position of the children's librarian would probably

approximate that of the high school librarian, and since the policy of the school and library in regard to children's reading would be the same, the position of supervisor of children's reading would probably be unnecessary. If there were such a supervisor, her equipment would have to be equivalent to that of other school supervisors.

The triangular personal relations involved in the combination of departmental and functional systems make for confusion and inefficiency. A serious study of the problem is worth while, since divided responsibility and divided sympathy among the three administrators of children's departments may mean that the children are not being ushered into the adult department under favorable auspices.

The policy adopted in directing library service to children should largely determine the policy of the entire library system, just as educational theory and practice are determining the attitude of the state toward adults. If the children's rooms do not produce adults who can help themselves through books, they are not living up to their purpose. But when the supervisor can carry out her policies so far and no further, the library will lose touch, as it does, with children too old for the children's room, who can find no organized help in the adult department. It seems that notwithstanding their interest in library work with children, the administrative heads of libraries have not fully realized this aspect of its usefulness, as preparation for the adult department. As it is, the work with children too often reaches a dead end when it ought to

be showing results, at the threshold of the adult department. Instead of library service to children being overemphasized, it has been emphasized at the wrong end, due largely to faulty administration. It is not less important than adult library service; it is in fact the foundation for the entire adult library system and can be consistently considered in no other way. In order to supervise a work of such proportions, some general library experience on the part of the supervisor, as well as a solid background of educational theory and practice and specialization in library service to children, would seem urgently necessary; and in order to carry out the policies of the supervisor, some experience with children on the part of the branch librarian, as agent of the supervisor, is essential.

There are as yet no fixed standards by which the results of the work in the children's room may be measured. A study in regard to the reading of the children from the time they have access to the children's room until they enter the adult department of the library would establish in a scientific way the effect of these rooms on individuals. So far only the immediate results have been described in vague although glowing terms, by those whose statements seem to be inspired by feeling rather than facts. If a record could be kept of the graduates of the children's rooms, we should have a basis of fact upon which to appraise their accomplishments. No better proof could be asked, if such a study established the fact that the children who had learned to read good books and to use books for information in the children's library,

read better books in the adult department than those who had not used a children's room, and that young wage earners knew how to get help out of the library.

Every social and educational reform has started as the detached enthusiasm of persons of one idea. Later on the movement is fitted into the general scheme. This has been the history of innovations in the public schools, which in the majority of cases were organized by private individuals or societies and then taken over by the public school system. Whether the children's rooms will ever become adjunctive to a system of class room libraries, it is too early to decide. The foregoing suggestions are offered as a basis for discussion to those who wish to consider the functions of the children's room from a broad social and educational point of view.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARIAN AND HER TRAINING

If the facts and arguments presented in this study lead anywhere in particular, it is to the conclusion that children's libraries are monopolized by the younger children. The books, methods, and above all the librarian of the children's room are adapted to children under fourteen. The Carnegie library in Pittsburgh at first employed kindergarteners as children's librarians, because at that time they were the only people available who seemed fitted for work with children.

Of those children who leave school as soon as they can go to work, the majority are boys. Evidently school appeals less to them than to girls, which seems as much the reason for their leaving as the necessity for the support of someone dependent upon them. There are, therefore, more boys than girls out of school.¹ These boys are certainly not found in any large numbers in public libraries. Since all children's librarians are women, and frequently the younger members of the profession,² they can hardly be ex-

¹ See Conditions under which children leave school to go to work, In United States bureau of labor. Report on women and child wage-earners, VII (1910).

² The average age of one class in the training school for children's librarians at Pittsburgh was 26. This school furnishes only a small proportion of the librarians of children's rooms.

pected to select books or to arrange their work in a manner to attract or hold the half grown boy. Educators are agreed that whether younger children should be under the exclusive control of women or not, at least the boy from fourteen to eighteen needs a man to help direct his education. The library is likely to discriminate against these young wage-earners; (1) by the literary nature of the book selection, which may lead to dilettantism rather than to discrimination; (2) by undue consideration of the needs of school children; and (3) by leaving almost entirely to young women the practical direction of young people's reading. It is safe to say that most children's librarians do not regard themselves as teachers in a continuation school, nor are they fitted by training or temperament to be such.³

So rapid has been the growth of children's work in libraries, that the standards of qualifications and the compensation for the services of the children's librarian are not properly measured or adequately adjusted. In almost any other profession compensation is fixed with reference to training and experience. Standards are being rapidly developed in the profession of high school librarianship, which will raise the position of high school librarian to that of a high school teacher, but in many cases the librarian of the children's room is rated solely upon personal grounds: Personality may include charm of manner, cultivated speech, refined bearing, a sense of humor, and last but

³ See Wilkinson, Librarian as a teacher. *Journal of Education*, 66: 121-2 (1907).

not least an ability to dress tastefully. Such may be also the qualifications demanded of the high school librarian, but in addition to her training.

Those who do library work with children and administer children's rooms may be divided into several classes, according to training and equipment, which may consist of: (1) a high school education, and a one-year apprentice course in a library—this is probably the minimum requirement, although it is not unusual to find a library page doing children's work; (2) a high school education or its equivalent, and the one or the two year course at the training school for children's librarians; (3) a high school education, general library school course and library experience which may include some informal training; (4) high school education, general library school course, and the second year course at the training school for children's librarians; (5) high school education, general library school course, library experience and the second year course at the children's librarians' training school; (6) a four-year college course, and the course at the training school; (7) four-year college course, a general library school course, and the training-school course;⁴ (8) four-year college course, a general library school course, library experience, and the course at the training school, which is the equipment of the minority. No matter what their previous training or experience, the members of the school are on equal footing. Any one who completes satisfactorily

⁴ According to the catalogue of the Carnegie training school for 1912-3, only six graduates had this preparation. Thirty-five per cent had college degrees, and twenty per cent some college training.

the first year course may take the second year course. Since this school cannot supply the demand for childrens' librarians, having graduated less than two hundred young women since its opening in 1901, the majority of those in charge of children's reading in public libraries have still less educational preparation than the school requires or supplies.

It is obvious that those who are to administer an important department of education should know something about educational methods and principles. Inasmuch as the practical work of the children's library and the books and methods to be used in such work, are matters determined largely by the supervisor of children's work or the children's librarian, it is even more essential that the children's librarian know something of education, than that the teacher should, for the teacher does not determine the methods of the school. When librarians compare the equipment of teachers and librarians, they seem to overlook the fact that the children's librarian and the supervisor of children's work often hold a position in the library equivalent to the position of a school principal or supervisor, who in most cities has had a training and experience with children which is far superior to that of any children's librarian. If this fact is borne in mind, it will be seen that the qualifications required of the children's librarian fall far short of those required of other workers in the educational field.

The children's librarian's position requires that she should know something not only of elementary-school

and high-school methods and aims, but much more of the education of children out of school. Practically no training is given or required along these lines in any library school. It is putting it mildly to say "that the other shortcomings in library training seems to me the failure to give the student knowledge of the social and educational forces with which the library is allied and with which it must cooperate. Young librarians usually know very little of the state's relation to education, courses of study, and of the different grades of high schools and normal schools. The plans for cooperation between library and school fail to meet with cordial response from the superintendent because the librarian shows an utter lack of knowledge of the methods and aims of the school. It seems to me that there should be training in sociology and in the history of education and the work of the public schools."⁵ It goes without saying that a course of lectures on library work with schools is in no way equivalent to intensive study of educational psychology, educational theory and practice, vocational education, and the pedagogy of reading. Even a course of reading in the proceedings of the National education association, which would reveal much to librarians of the aims and ideals of the educational world is not usually recommended to the prospective children's librarian, although the knowledge she would get from such reading would seem to be the least that could be required of an educational worker. If the readings were narrowed down to those dealing only with books,

⁵ Marvin, *Communication, in Public Libraries*, 11, 267 (1906).

literature, and the teaching of reading, the course would assume bulky proportions.

Far-sighted members of the profession have seen that library training generally is in the process of evolution and at about the same stage that medicine and law occupied twenty or thirty years ago.⁶ In the library profession there are no state examining boards for librarians which could establish certain minimum standards by examination and certification. Many librarians are opposed to any general standardization of qualifications for children's librarians to be maintained by examinations, such as is being established for the position of high-school librarian. The children's librarian begins her professional career with no educational or pedagogical training, and her work and the attitude of her superiors usually does not lead her to read educational periodicals or to become familiar with educational principles even when she is trying to cooperate with the schools.

Not only are these conditions obviously fatal to effective cooperation with schools, they work manifest injustice to the librarian who is well grounded in educational principles. If such equipment receives no special recognition, there is little incentive for a well educated woman to enter the profession of children's librarian, except perhaps as school librarian. She may be at no better advantage in the public library than a slip of a girl with engaging manners and a literary taste.

⁶ See Bostwick, *American public library*, 330-41; Robertson, *Should the education department issue a librarian's certificate?* *Public Libraries*, 9: 209-12 (1904).

A second factor which is unfavorable to one who has invested in a good education is the training class or apprentice class within the library, from which children's librarians are often recruited. Instruction in such classes is given by heads of departments in the library. The curriculum is similar to that of a library school. In a final analysis the library training class is only a systemized and organized apprentice system.

Apprenticeship is a characteristic phase in the history of vocational and professional education. Modern industry has crowded it out of the trades, and higher standards, out of the professions. So the apprentice system puts the library profession economically and educationally at least twenty-five or thirty years behind the times. It does this in several ways. The members of such a class are frequently those who cannot or do not wish to go to a library school. As a graduate of a training school, an apprentice can hope to receive about the same wages as a clerk in a department store. She is willing to work for little, for she wishes to stay at home, and the library affords a genteel way to earn pin money. These facts do not speak well for the personnel.

If, on the other hand, the student happens to be ambitious and really competent, the system works injustice to her as well as to the library. In some libraries the apprentice, in addition to her work in the class, serves without pay as part of her training, and she may contribute considerable time as a substitute. If the library gets more out of such students than it gives in the way of genuine preparation for a career,

the system needs careful scrutiny. Student apprentices should know all the facts as to their present and future status. Sometimes, it is true, a specially qualified graduate of an apprentice class may be given opportunities for advancement; but her progress will be uncertain and slow, and dependent very largely upon the attitude of the administrative head of the library toward professional equipment. The apprentice is likely to find that, with all her demonstrated qualifications for a higher position, she will not appeal to the appointing authority in comparison with the graduate of a library school, who may possess training but no experience. Nor can she feel safe after she has made good in a higher position, for in the event of a change of administration, she may again be forced to demonstrate her fitness and much more thoroughly than the library school graduate under the same circumstances. Should young women be attracted into what often proves to be a professional *cul-de-sac*, when they might have a wider choice as graduates of a library school? That there are willing recruits is nothing in favor of the system. That has been the plea of the employers of child labor. "Home girls" are partly responsible for the low wages of women in industry. The library should not encourage and perpetuate such a condition.

Not only are the possible consequences to individuals serious, but the effect upon the library is little short of disastrous. If there is a constant stream of young women willing to be underpaid and encouraged in this ambition, what of the effect on the graduate

of a professional library school who is capitalized to the extent of her training? Her earning power should have been increased according to the time and money spent on her education. Any profession has some mechanical tasks not calling for any high degree of skill or ability. The girl who helps a busy dentist may gain considerable familiarity with his profession, and some agility in the mechanical operations demanded of her. She can never become a dentist, however, without professional training, and she is not in any way a competitor of dentists. Every graduate of a training school, on the other hand, becomes a "librarian," and as such a competitor of the trained woman. If she has "personality" she can often go as far, as a children's librarian, as the librarian with four years of college training, special pedagogical preparation, and a certificate from a library school.

Examinations are arranged as a test for admission to the higher grades in some libraries, but the highly trained and thoroughly equipped worker is examined in common with the graduate of the training school. Otherwise the library repudiates its own apprentice class.

Not only does the apprentice's willingness to accept low wages reduce salaries, but she is likely to reduce the library's efficiency by a lack of professional spirit. Three apprentice clerks in a library may contribute the energy, enthusiasm, and ability of one scientifically and technically trained individual. There are quite as many stories outside the library of absurd answers to questions on the part of library assistants

as there are within the library about the foolish questions of the public.

It is apparent, therefore, that only the most ambitious and earnest young women will take the time needed for training in educational principles and methods; for except in the case of school librarians, no special emphasis is laid upon such training as a preparation for children's librarianship. It is not only that the standards for children's librarians are low—although they are low, if such librarianship be considered an educational function—but that the standards differ so widely among different libraries. Leaders in children's work themselves do not agree as to the qualifications. Because of this and the additional fact that the supply of trained children's librarians is inadequate to the demand, several large libraries have established special training classes for children's librarians, admitting to these classes only those who have had library experience and training.

The Cleveland public library has a system of apprenticeship for children's librarians, which is somewhat like that of the young interne before he becomes a doctor. For two years the young women who took the course were required to have a college degree. Some of them had had some library experience and training as well as teaching experience. The average number of students in the class now is eleven, of whom eight have had one year's training in a library school, and the average number of years of library experience per pupil is two and a third years. These students do practice work of thirty-five hours a week,

for which they are paid. Several mornings a week are given to lectures and recitations, which include sixty-four on children's literature; twelve on child-study; twelve on social conditions; four on administration; four on departmental organization; three on branch loan methods; two on cooperation with schools; ten on library extension methods; two on instruction in the use of books; two on reports; and one on catalogues for children. During 1914 eight lectures on educational psychology were given by a normal school teacher. By this means there has been not only standardization of the children's librarian's equipment, but unification of the children's work within this particular library, with no injustice to either student or library.

In most library schools the technical requirements of library work seem to be over-emphasized. The filing systems of a library can be readily mastered and are scarcely worth the attention they receive unless the librarian's profession is considered that of a clerk instead of an educational function.

Library work with children has many features which should make it congenial and attractive to those who are interested alike in books and young people. It should appeal to the educated and cultivated young woman. It can do so only when it is financially remunerative and when it leads to a position as dignified as that of the high school teacher.

The work of the children's room should be scientifically conceived and conducted. This means depth as well as breadth in training, and the maintenance of

an educational point of view. Since librarians have not as yet recognized themselves as teachers in a great continuation school, some of them still have "that acute consciousness of a mission; that accentuated and complacent responsibility for the welfare and improvement of society; that strained and over-serious attitude toward their own work and methods, an attitude which seems to regard the contemplation of their calling as a sacred rite or ceremonial."⁷ Education should be considered as a unit, but how can it be so considered by those who know nothing of it? It is evident that "the immense and rapid increase of libraries . . . calls for a well considered and far-sighted scheme of training beyond anything now offered."⁸

Although general library schools offer lectures on children's library work, there is only one school in this country for the special training of children's librarians. College graduates are admitted to this school without examination, and students with certificates of the first-year course are admitted to the second-year course upon recommendations. Others take examinations in literature, general information, and general history, which admits them to the first-year course, and to the second-year course if the first is completed satisfactorily. Three courses are given—each of one year. The first is a course in library economy as applied to work with children. Certificates are given upon a satisfactory completion of this course. The second-year course consists of paid prac-

⁷ Wyer, *Outside the walls*. *Library Journal*, 36: 172 (1911).

⁸ Plummer, *Training for library service*, in Munro's *Cyclopedia of education*, IV, 24-6.

tice work and lectures. A special course, which is open to students of accredited library schools, combines the salient features of both regular courses.

The technical subjects for the first-year course are the same as in any library school; that is, classification, book-numbering, order and accession work, cataloguing, shelf-listing, and lending systems. In addition there are lectures on administration of children's rooms, with special reference to the relation of the room to the adult library; book selection for children, with a course of selected reading; elements of parliamentary law, for use in directing clubs; methods of conducting home libraries and reading clubs; illustrated book lists and picture work; forty-two lectures on story-telling, eleven on work with schools including the history of education, and additional lectures on special educational subjects, and one lecture on books for older boys and girls. During the second year some of these courses are amplified, and a thesis is required; there are four further lectures on the relation between libraries and schools, and three on reading lists. No attempt is made to give students any psychological, pedagogical, or sociological training. By means of the entrance examination, students not sufficiently familiar with psychological, pedagogical, or sociological principles may be refused admittance. The catalogue does not indicate how much of such training is considered sufficient. The fact that those who are not college women can satisfactorily complete the course outlined above, emphasizes the inequalities of a system which gives the college woman no advan-

tage. It does not show—as has been claimed—that the non-college student is really as desirable as the college trained woman, because she can apparently do the same work in the same way. If a woman with little previous training along educational lines is as satisfactory a graduate of the school as a person trained in the science of education, then library work with children offers no special inducement to the latter. The high-school library makes much the same personal demands upon its librarian as does a children's room—that she should have “tact, agreeable presence, interest in young people and in the work for its own sake,” and both educational authorities and school librarians agree that the high-school librarian must have training equivalent to that of the high-school teacher. The librarian will not care to admit that the work with children in the public library calls for less.

In the training school for children's libraries, educational principles are considered only in the lectures on the relations between libraries and schools, which deal with methods and forms used in the school work of libraries, “the relation of work with schools to various library agencies, and its value as an active factor in the field of educational activity.” There are twenty or more special lectures on about the same number of subjects, which include the work of library commissions and of large libraries, of playgrounds, literature for children, story telling, and library architecture. Children's librarians are in demand especially

* Ward, *The high-school library*, 21 (1915).

for work among younger children. Therefore, library schools are forced to ignore almost entirely any work with older children, and are unable to recognize the library as a means of vocational training and a continuation school, because the library as continuation school is practically non-existent. Instead of shaping the work of children's libraries, the schools and their courses are shaped by them. The usual methods are rationalized and made the subject of systematic study. From an educational point of view, such courses as outlined above seem hardly adequate as training for an educational function. They are conducted entirely from the library standpoint with little apparent conception of educational unity. The fact that only one lecture is given on book selection for the intermediate department is evidence of the small place of older children in the children's library. There are, of course, many explanations for these conditions. Children's library work is just emerging from its infancy, and a pioneer school is likely to meet demands and not to initiate policies.

The present methods of training children's librarians in apprentice classes, general library schools, and special schools are largely the results of expediency and experimentation, and an unprecedented demand for workers in a field where principles and standards are not yet established. The growing interest in school libraries, especially high school libraries, will probably mean higher standards of qualifications for children's librarians generally. In the high school, if the librarian is to rank with the high school teachers, who

are nearly always college graduates, she will have to be better educated and more thoroughly trained than is the average librarian. The standards for school librarians, being higher than for the ordinary children's librarian, will undoubtedly have an effect on the curricula of library schools and the preparation required of the student who would take charge of children's libraries. In the school libraries administered by school boards, a training in educational methods equivalent to that of a teacher will be required of the librarian. The elementary-school committee of the National education association recommends that those who have charge of library work with schools should have training to equal "that of the school supervising staff and [to] include teaching experience, library school training, and at least two years' experience in general library work including work in a children's room."¹⁰ Since the children's librarian is generally in charge of work with schools except in the largest cities, this recommendation indicates the particulars in which her qualifications must be raised.

It now seems an auspicious time, as the interest in school libraries is increasing, to broaden the requirements for the profession of children's librarian along educational lines, and with the assistance of educational authorities to devise a plan of constructive training which will recognize public education as a unit.

Actual needs of older boys and girls as well as the needs of younger children now merit the attention of

¹⁰ Proceedings, 1915: 1073.

educators. If school and library were administered by a joint board, would not the educational authorities take more interest in the position of the children's librarian, both in and out of the school? The excuse of the librarian who acknowledges that the apprentice system is a mistake, and that standards are low, is that the library has not money enough to pay for better trained and better educated assistants. With the library system as part of the educational plant, this difficulty might be overcome. The librarian-teacher would assume her rightful place as an important member of the teaching staff, and would herself have the benefit of contact with the ideals and aims of the educational world, which include and transcend those of the library world.

CHAPTER TEN

AIDS TO LIBRARY WORK WITH CHILDREN

The oral story was the earliest means of perpetuating traditions, handing down history, and teaching ethics. If in the child are repeated the stages of development through which the race has passed, story telling is well adapted to early childhood. It is used in the schools to teach ethics and to develop the child's imagination and taste. In the library it has been a means of attracting children and also of cultivating their taste for certain desirable literature. The story hour is said to advertise the childrens' room and to promote correct conduct therein.

To produce the ethical and artistic effect claimed for it, the story must be told by one who is well grounded in psychological and pedagogical principles. Many librarians believe that they can judge a capable story teller, but their tests are too often concerned with personality rather than method. If the story is to be well told, preparation and study are necessary. The originals of the older epics and folk stories should be examined in the form of an authoritative translation. In the case of the *Odyssey*, the *Iliad*, and the other epics, the story teller will necessarily adapt from the translation. It is a question whether the adaptation she makes in telling the story is as good as the

one from which she selects. Reading aloud might serve a better purpose, or it might be wiser to wait until the child has reached an age at which he may read for himself.

Whether the time that is usually spent in preparation is justified by the results of the story hour, has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of all librarians. The children who hear the stories often read the books they hear about, but at the most only a few children are reached. The same children are likely to come to the story hour again and again, with a scattered few who have never come before. Even if the librarian were careful to take all the children in the library register in succession in making up a story hour group, she could hardly arrange to have each child hear stories oftener than twice a year. Thus it is impossible to reach in an impartial or systematic way the entire juvenile public which the library is supposed to serve.

If story telling develops a better literary taste among children, it might be justified if it brought the influence to bear on all alike. But the cultivation of such taste in an individual undergoes constant interruption. Many librarians question whether it is the function of the library to teach children to discriminate between the books on its shelves, or to make a special effort to introduce them to books which it may be thought desirable for them to know. It is the duty of the library to furnish books to the public; so long as the books approach a reasonably high standard, is it the library's concern what the public may read?

So long as the books on the shelves of the children's room are wholesome, the library assumes a teaching function, whenever it attempts to guide children to certain books in preference to others; and these efforts can hardly fail to be sporadic and uncertain.

The oral story is most effective when told to younger children who have already listened to it in school, where it may be told by the teacher and acted by the children every day and at the most effective time in the child's education. If the librarian has mastered the art of story telling she might be asked to tell stories in the schools where all the children in time could be reached. When the library assumes any part of the school's duties, the significance of such a step should be clearly recognized. Story-telling is unmistakably a teaching method.

In directing the attention of younger readers to a class of books otherwise neglected, the library story hour may be of real service, (1) if the books are worth the trouble, (2) if they are not already being read by the children, (3) if they should not be read at a later age, or (4) if the groups chosen for the story hour have been selected because they especially need the introduction to certain books.

As a method of advertising a new room or of increasing the use of one already established, the story hour gives the desired results. By means of cooperation with the school before the room is opened and by means of constant contact with the teachers, the benefits of the children's department in the library may then be equitably distributed among the children in

a way that is not true of the story hour. If the children's room does not attract or hold the children, there is something the matter with either the books on the shelves, the methods of administration, or the persons in charge; and a story hour may be only a poor substitute for efficient and patient work.

The same might be said of attempts to use the story hour in an effort to further discipline. Whether the disciplinary effect is due to the ethical influence of the stories or to the fact that only well behaved children may hear them, does not appear. If children are habitually mischievous in a library, they are there for some other purpose than reading. The books and periodicals may be poorly selected; or the assistants may show poor judgment in their methods of approach. There should be no hesitation in excluding those children who exhibit no interest in reading, but who come to get warm or to amuse themselves by teasing the other children. A library is neither a reformatory nor a lounging room.

In a large system, it is claimed, story telling adds cohesiveness to the children's work in the branches. The meaning of this statement is not clear, but something is wrong with an organization which requires such a method to unify the workers. When it is to be a factor in the education of library assistants, story telling should come as a part of their preliminary training and not at the expense of the library or the children who hear the practice work.

Considerations of economy and efficiency require that if it is the librarian's duty to teach children by

means of stories, she should teach them systematically and impartially. It is a question, however, whether the public library has not enough to do in the way of reaching the public. The story hour too often has been conducted because it happens to be the fashion, but the library which is working intensively instead of extensively very often has little time for it.

To any one who has told stories to children or heard them told, these statements may seem far from convincing. Story telling has its psychological effect upon the story teller as well as upon the children. The almost magical responsiveness, the "beautiful seriousness," the sighs of satisfaction on the part of the audience give the thrill felt in a larger degree by the successful musician, actor, or orator. Anything which has such an immediate and beautiful response as a good story well told seems to need no other justification. This result of the story may be as transitory as a summer cloud, since moral and ethical lessons for children must come through action. It is dangerous to stir up emotions which do not result in immediate action; and to encourage children to indulge in such emotions may well be a mild kind of sentimental dissipation for both the children and the story teller. We need to be cautious about the way we cultivate emotions in children lest they be evanescent and insincere. That aesthetic appreciation and virtue, especially civic virtue, have no necessary relation was asserted by Schiller, who said, "In every epoch in history when the arts flourished and taste reigned supreme, mankind was sunk in depravity, and

it is not possible to find a single example of aesthetic culture, at once widespread and advanced, among a people possessed of political freedom and civic virtue, of fine manners accompanied by genuine morality, or of behavior at once both refined and sincere." When libraries try to improve taste, they may not only be outside their sphere, but engaged in a dubious undertaking.

The story hour should be conducted only by experts who are in a position to watch its results. It is hardly justifiable to play upon the sensibilities of children unless we are quite sure of the aims and results of such a delicate pastime. The fact that children will read certain books that they hear about does not of itself prove that the story hour is worth while.

For older boys and girls the club and the circle for reading aloud are considered successful by many librarians. Miss Caroline M. Hewins of Hartford organized reading clubs for older children during the summer vacations. Her "What You Can Get out of a Henty Book" is in its way a library classic. Miss Hewins helped boys to become interested in history by the ingenious use of Henty books; arranging a list of good histories to be read in connection with the stories.

In the Cleveland public library, the self governing clubs for debates and for the reading of popular science and travel have been successful. There is a supervisor of reading clubs. The leaders are men and women "to whom this form of social service makes an especial appeal," and who can either contribute a

knowledge of some special subject of interest to boys or girls, or share with them some experiences such as foreign travel.

Twenty or more clubs in the Cincinnati public library are conducted by neighborhood men and women in the library building and with relation to books as aids. Club work is successful among young women and girls in a factory in Dayton. The average school attendance of these workers had ended with the sixth grade; and the management was glad to encourage a regular course of study and to print the club year book.

To facilitate the transference of older children to the adult department the supervisor of clubs in the New York public library has organized clubs for boys and girls between the ages of eleven and sixteen. A Cranford club at one branch read *Pride and Prejudice*, *Old Curiosity Shop*, *David Copperfield*, and *Twelfth Night*. For the most part the literary side of the library's resources is emphasized in the New York clubs.

Reading clubs are organized in England among those boys and girls who are nearing the end of their school course, and among those who have left school. There are over 500 reading clubs of the national home reading union in the London schools. This organization also publishes a periodical.

As in the case of the story hour, only a small proportion of the children can be reached by the clubs that the library conducts, whereas a larger number of the young people both in and out of school might be

using the library, if its activities were concentrated along the line of its special functions. Those clubs which the library organizes and accommodates with a room in which to meet, are a different matter from the clubs which are conducted by librarians or supervisors. The cost in time measured by the salary of the librarian and the supervisor should be computed, so that libraries may know how much per club member it costs to conduct this work, which is after all that of the social settlement. True enough, the best results cannot be measured, as the defenders of story hour and clubs often say, but some of the results are measurable and can be ascertained.

When clubs are necessary to attract children, it is usually because there is no place in the library where the older boys and girls feel at home, or can find satisfaction for other than their literary needs. In such cases the club may be a substitute for quiet work along routine lines. Many librarians believe that so long as most libraries are unable to buy all the serious books which the working community needs, they can scarcely afford to conduct extension work which reaches only the brightest and most ambitious children; work which is rather the business of social agencies and the school.

For some time bulletin-making was considered an important part of the work of a children's room. A bulletin as known to librarians usually consists of one or more pictures on a given subject pasted on a sheet of card-board. Accompanying the illustration is a selected list of books, and perhaps appropriate verses

or quotations lettered by hand. Holiday bulletins may have only a verse or a picture. The purpose of the bulletin is to attract the attention of the children to certain desirable books. The pictures and the illuminated letters are also supposed to add to the artistic atmosphere of the room, and to contribute to the aesthetic education of the children.

The advocates of bulletins insist that they must be carefully planned, and executed in a finished manner. Above all each bulletin must have unity of thought. Like the story hour, bulletins have been the fashion. If a successful bulletin must take some time in the making, would not the time of the maker computed in money buy a really artistic picture? For it must be admitted that the majority of bulletins appear amateurish and fussy rather than artistic. Library assistants are not always characterized by superior artistic ability.

Lincoln's birthday and other holiday bulletins have been made at libraries in which the material on Lincoln and the particular holiday is not equal to the demand. A good picture or bust of a notable person would be a more dignified memorial. Some of the bulletins exhibited in children's rooms have been both artistic and pleasing to adults. As to their effects artists are not agreed that beautiful pictures have much if any effect upon young children. Certain pictures are supposed to produce a certain atmosphere in the children's room. Probably most of the results are upon adults. "In fact, unpopular though it may be to project such a theory, one fancies that the real

educational power of the picture book is upon the elders. . . . Whether a child brought up wholly on the aesthetic toy book would realize the greatness of Rembrandt's etchings or other masterpieces of realistic art more easily than one who had only known the current pictures of cheap magazines is not a question to be settled off hand."¹ These remarks coming as they do from an artist are significant and equally applicable to pictures outside of books. We lack exact knowledge as to the influence of pictures upon children, and so we give them what we like ourselves. Teachers and librarians might well study the elements of the comic supplement which show at least an understanding of children's interests. The immaculate art of the children's room is not yet a successful rival of the "funny sheet."

Pictures may be collected, however, for mounting and circulating to the schools. Several pictures on one board illustrating an historical subject will be welcomed by teachers.²

Another method of calling the attention of children to certain books is by means of a book mark, which may carry a lesson in respect for the book. One of the best of these is the Maxson book-mark, which has on one side a list of books and on the other this little parable:

Once upon a time a Library Book was overheard talking to a little boy who had just borrowed it, and this is what it said: "Please don't handle me with dirty hands. I should feel ashamed to be seen when the next little boy borrowed me.

¹ White, *Children's books and their illustrators*, 5, 63 (1897).

² See Chapter Six.

"Or leave me out in the rain. Books can catch cold as well as children.

"Or make marks on me with your pen or pencil. It would spoil my looks.

"Or lean on me with your elbows when you are reading me. It hurts.

"Or open me and lay me face down on the table. You wouldn't like to be treated so.

"Or put between my leaves a pencil or anything thicker than a single sheet of thin paper. It would strain my back.

"Whenever you are through reading me, if you are afraid of losing your place, don't turn down the corner of one of my leaves, but have a neat little Book Mark to put in where you stop and then close me and lay me down on my side so that I may have a good rest.

"Remember, that I want to visit a great many other boys and girls after you are through with me.

"Besides, I may meet you again some day, and you would be sorry to see me looking old and torn and soiled. Help to keep me fresh and clean, and I will help you to be happy."

The Christmas book exhibit, which is a feature of work with children, enables the library to serve as an advisory agent. Usually the local book-dealer will be willing to cooperate with the library in getting up such an exhibit. In fairness he should be given every opportunity to do so. The books may be borrowed from the publisher or the dealer, or bought outright for the future use of the library. Good and beautiful editions should be included, but there should be also some of the good literature for children now published in substantial cheap form. In one case cited by Miss Mary W. Plummer,^{*} the library and the local dealer issued a catalogue in conjunction, and the dealer distributed copies and referred to the library

^{*} Written by the Rev. H. D. Maxson, Menominee (Wis.).

for a view of the books. One of the largest book stores in New York advertises that it has available copies of the lists of children's books prepared by the New York, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Brooklyn public libraries.

The publisher has an interest in the sale of good editions rather than the cheaper form of gift books, and consequently in measures which tend to make children lovers and so buyers of books when they become adults. Handled in a broad and comprehensive way, the Christmas book exhibit should affect the sale of books in the shops, now dominated by the cheap and gaudy children's books especially designed to tempt the bachelor uncle and the careless parent. Such an exhibit might well become a permanent feature of the children's room. By adding to it the worthy books as they appear, and cooperating with the local dealer so that he will keep on hand the books shown in the exhibit, the librarian might exert practical influence against the floods of cheap literature.

The exhibit might serve also as an inducement to children to own their books. A collection of children's books from the various series of those publications which are attractive in form and cheap in price, would do something to encourage children to buy their favorites; something they are not inclined to do in this day of free libraries and free text books.

In spending the time necessary to carry out all these methods of attracting children, the children's librarian is likely to neglect the simplest and most

* *Library Journal*. 35: 4-9 (1911).

effective method of all; and that is to know books by reading rather than by studying lists. In the pronounced reaction against the older type of librarian, who browsed, we have the brisk modern librarian who is too busy perfecting her means of approach to the public to look inside the books. Although assistants in a library are often discouraged from looking into a book in library hours, it is as necessary for them to know the stock which they handle as it is for the salesman to know his stock. Too many librarians seem to be so fascinated by the ingenious system they have created, that they count agility in keeping up with the system of more importance than familiarity with books. We need a revival of the type of old-fashioned librarian who read and knew books. With an eight-hour day, the children's librarian has little time outside the library in which to keep in touch with educational matters and to become acquainted with children's books. Although this is her main business, she is often made to feel that technique is the chief end of library work. If all her education and ambition ends in this shuffling of cards, she may well ask "Why?" An hour a day spent in reading in the library should be the least required of the children's librarian. This time might be divided between books for children and books about children and education. The public is much more likely to feel timid about interrupting a person who is manipulating cards in a mysterious manner than if he were reading a book. Absorbed reading is not for the library, but glancing through any book unfamiliar to the assistant is to the

interest of the public. More good can be accomplished by the librarian who becomes familiar with the books on the shelves and with new books as they come in, than by the one who spends the same amount of time making bulletins or telling stories. Children and adults always go back to the library assistant who knows enough about books to give helpful advice.

One thing the inquiring public does require of everybody in a library, and that is that they know color, shape, size, and relative value of every book. Until the librarian shows more familiarity with her stock, other methods of interesting children or adults might well be curtailed. The street car conductor who doesn't know the names of the streets along his route; the saleswoman who is ignorant of the relative value *from the customer's point of view*, of what she is trying to sell; the dealer in horses who has never mastered the good points of the animals; the pharmacist unfamiliar with the drugs and their effects, are comparable to the librarian who is unacquainted with the contents of the books she handles. Clubs, story hours, and bulletins cannot make up for such a deficiency.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

BOOK SELECTION

To no small extent the policy of a library and the quality of the service rendered to the community depend upon the books chosen for distribution. Familiarity with community life which must modify and clarify knowledge of child nature is an essential factor in the selection of books for children. The facts of child psychology are always subject to local variations. Whether a child lives in a quiet country village, a busy city, or a manufacturing center, is of great importance in determining the kind of books he needs. If it were merely a question of deciding what books had literary values, the matter would be simple indeed, but the whole problem of book selection for children is to decide upon books which have values for children, a distinction not always apparent in the books selected for children's rooms in public libraries.¹

Among the numerous community influences at work which may effect the choice of books, several stand out and suggest others. If the industries afford what are known as "blind-alley" occupations, this fact is of importance to the library, for such occupa-

¹ See Burnite, Good and poor books for boys and girls. *Public Libraries*. 11: 360-2 (1906), and Standard of selection of children's books. *Library Journal*. 36: 161-6 (1911).

tions lead nowhere, and keep the worker an unskilled laborer until he is no longer young. On the other hand, a manufactory which demands in all of its departments a certain amount of technical skill, furnishes to the child a part of his training which the library may supplement with books carefully fitted to him and his work.

The foreign colony is likely to be homogenous but isolated from the rest of the community. Native children of foreign parents come under the influence of the public schools, and they can also be reached by any well administered library. But we have also to consider the child who comes to America after he is fourteen and who reads English very little or not at all. He constitutes another variation of the library's public. Every foreign neighborhood in a large city is a community in itself. Every neighborhood demands special study and special kinds of books. Except for a few reference books, a general catalogue such as that published by the United States bureau of education in 1904 for the American Library Association, cannot serve the purposes of all libraries without modifications to serve local needs. To make collections of children's books the same for every community library and for every branch would be indeed unintelligent.

In contrast with the industrial community which almost always includes the foreign groups, there is the farming group and the purely residential community such as the suburban town. A different kind of literature is needed for the children in such com-

munities, who may be strong where the city children are weak, and vice versa. A well-to-do American neighborhood produces a particular type of child, whose book needs are more difficult to diagnose than those of the less fortunate children. His parents often ignore his reading or buy books of an inferior sort. It is not poor people who are the largest purchasers of poor children's books. The children of our "best families" are often reading the same sort of stories as the dime novel. The only difference, as Mr. C. M. Harvey has said, is the "difference between ten cents and a dollar and a half." Some of these books find their way into libraries in response to the demand of the American child who has been brought up neither on the sagas, poems, or romances which are daily food to the foreign child, nor on a collection of literary masterpieces such as the Old Testament. Many American children know little of the Bible as literature.

Having read the "leading juveniles," the native children come to the library with their tastes already spoiled, and the librarian reluctantly buys for them a few of the best books of the better series, and hopes that their taste may improve. It is safe to say that this hope is too often unfounded. On the whole the foreign child responds much more readily to the influences of good books.

Given these four classes into which most American communities fall: the industrial community; the foreign born colony within it, the residential or suburban town, and the rural village, what of the influences common to all? First of all, there is the

school. As has been pointed out, a progressive school will prepare pupils to use a library intelligently, and it will demand of the library a selection of books as strong along historical, scientific and technical lines as in literature.

The motion picture show is popularly supposed to spoil the children for the higher joys of reading. But to a certain extent it presents geographical and historical subjects in a more interesting and vivid way than do the books to be found in most libraries. How should this kind of entertainment affect the choice of books for the children who have access to it? No doubt there is something in the pictures which books cannot supply, but there may be some other elements in the children's enjoyment of them which properly selected books may give. As an educational and recreational agency, this new form of amusement is a competitor of the public library, and the only move which the library can make in the competitive game is to make sure that in its choice of books it recognizes children's spontaneous interests as efficiently as its rival.

The reading available outside of school and library is another means of modifying children's tastes. It is seldom realized that the daily newspaper forms quite as large a part of juvenile reading as the five-cent weekly. In many homes this paper is of the cheapest and most vulgar sort. Its appeal is to the childlike and simple mind. Everything is done in bold strokes, crude but effective. The humor is seldom subtle. The appeal to primitive emotions is upper-

most. Some of the characteristics enjoyed by children in the old folk tales appear in modern form in the daily papers. For the old tales are based upon the same elemental human occurrences. Excitement, fighting, and gore have always entertained childhood whether found in folk tales or in the modern newspaper. "Yellow" journals furnish much objectionable gossip, but before the time of journalism there were the tales of the elders by the fireside at the close of the adventurous day. Children and childlike minds demand the raw facts of life, whether in the velvet of good and ancient literary form, or the rags and tatters of modern realism.

Those of delicate sensibilities who attempt to diagnose the vulgarity of much of modern print cannot afford, as reformers, to assume a shocked attitude. This crudeness is a characteristic of democracy, and many of the events of the past would seem precisely as distasteful if they took place in their own town and were recorded in the local paper. The subjects of romantic poetry, especially ballads, are not essentially different from those exploited by yellow journalism; only the setting is changed. The respectable people of Robin Hood's time probably viewed his exploits with the same horror and disgust which a recent generation felt toward Jesse James. Desperadoes and rogues have long been the heroes of the plain people.

It is the business of the librarian to analyze, in a scientific manner and without prejudice, the effect of yellow journalism upon the children who come to the

library; and without attempting any moral reform, to meet the situation by the choice of books for children, always remembering "that the prig which lurks in most of us may be nurtured by too refined a diet."²

The nickel weekly is another factor in the child's reading, which should be carefully studied by the librarian, because it contains elements which every boy demands and has a right to demand. One of our leading modern literary critics has said of the penny dreadfuls of his own time, "Indeed out of this cut and dry, dull, swaggering and infantile art, I seem to have learned the very spirit of my life's enjoyment; met there the shadow of the characters I was to read about and love in a late future; . . . took from these rude cuts an enduring and transforming pleasure."³

The delight in the defeat and discomfiture of cruel and oppressive authorities is part of folk inheritance handed down from the days when heroes were those who could break old laws and make new ones. The pirate, because he has vanished from the seas, is a figure of romance. The bandit we still have with us; consequently stories about him are too realistic. But admiration for the train robber has the same elements as that for the pirate and Robin Hood; all are taking from the rich who have plenty. While this attitude is unethical, it is deeply ingrained in the traditions of the folk and must be recognized as one of the reasons for the popularity of the tales of violence. Interest in the life and welfare of the criminal has brought about

² White, *Children's books and their illustrators*, 63 (1897).

³ Stevenson, *A penny plain and twopence coloured. Memories and traits*, 226 (1887).

a school of criminal fiction and drama in which sympathy is excited for law breakers. Books of this class, if sufficiently literary in form, are received in many public libraries.

The boys' books in many children's libraries show the effect of taste somewhat too fussy and feminine. It is questionable whether the average children's librarian or grade teacher appreciates as a worker with boys does, that "the red-blooded boy, the boy in his early teens must have his thrill; he craves excitement, has a passion for action; 'something must be doing' all the time. . . . The difference between a 'Treasure Island' and a modern thriller in its many editions is not a difference in the elements so much as the use each author makes of them."⁴ In the selection of books for boys the librarian might profitably study the other agencies supplying books to boys and the strength of the counteracting influence of the library. A social survey would give to librarians much valuable information in regard to boys' tastes and their reading habits.⁵

Since there is no such thing as an average child, we shall have to think of the composite picture of a child here constructed. In studying him further, psychological principles may be applied. For the librarian the most important of these are the theories of apperception and the culture epoch theory. The teacher or librarian must discover the impulses, tastes, emotions, and aptitudes of the child. Acting in his in-

⁴ Mathews, *Blowing out the boy's brains*. Outlook. 108: 653 (1914).

⁵ See Chapter Twelve.

terest, she may select the qualities likely to be most useful, and develop them. Perhaps unconsciously there has been a tendency on the part of some librarians to select the traits easiest to observe, and the impulses for which mental food was easiest to provide. The craze for stories is characteristic of every child, and a good deal of the literature for children has been selected along this line in order to develop literary taste. Some of the scientific books for children are written in story form.

One of the reasons for the lack of standardization in book selection is the ignorance or indifference in regard to generally accepted psychological principles as they apply to the choice of books for children. The only way to determine the value of a book for a child is first to know the child, for the book's value *per se* may be and often is quite different from its value for children or for a certain child. Until psychological principles are applied, personal opinion will continue to govern book selection and no one children's librarian will accept the judgment of any other. Some children's librarians think that they know children by observation, experience, or memory of their own childhood—the most unreliable means of all—but such judgments must always be indeterminate, intangible, and of little practical worth to students of the subject. In all discussions of book selection there is evident the feeling that there can be no decisive standards; that the things of the mind are in the nature of things indeterminate and intangible and must always remain so. There is even sometimes a hint that to find out as

much as possible about the mental processes of the child may somehow hurt the child!

There are many reactions to stimuli or responses to situations which are as inevitable and as exactly known as any facts in chemistry and they should be familiar to the librarian. The opinions and feelings of librarians may be useful and valuable to themselves in choosing books, but they cannot be communicated to anybody else. So long as the art or science of book selection—it is a little of both—is made up only of individual opinions, it must remain in its present unsatisfactory condition of vagueness.

One of the very few books which does apply these principles of psychology in a practical way to book selection classifies the interests of children according to well-known facts of psychology. These interests could be further classified according to age.*

The psychological applications for book selection can only be hinted at here. To make the applications in detail as Miss Kready has done for fairy tales would require a book rather than a chapter.

All of the child's interests are toward doing, and so he demands books in which action prevails. Educators have thought to use books in which admirable characters perform admirable deeds to satisfy this craving for action and at the same time to teach an ethical lesson by presenting certain virtues for the child to imitate. Until recent years, the ethical and educational value of the child doing things for himself, whether making a table or playing game, has received

* Kready, *A study of fairy tales*, 13-3 (1916).

scant recognition. Consequently, books in children's libraries have not been of a sort to reinforce this instinct for action, experimentation and manipulation. Otherwise, the action is only second hand. The child's emotions are stirred, but it has never been satisfactorily proven that there is really an ethical result, and most of the arguments in favor of such a view are characterized by *a priori* reasoning.

The library in its choice of books for children might well emphasize the value of those books which will make the child want to do something tangible and concrete because in early years the child's brain increases in size by means of manual work. It will be necessary in that event for the librarian to forget all those invidious distinctions which she has been taught to make between cultural and practical reading. For children the most important culture probably comes when they make and do things, and not when they read about deeds, however glorious, performed by others. In fact, too much reading which stirs the emotions serves neither an ethical nor a cultural purpose. The school is more and more making lessons mean something to children by putting action first and book learning second, and only as an aid to action. As the schools reorganize themselves along these lines, the library must be prepared to meet an increasing demand for books which will supply children with the incentive to do. Such books as are already written are in great demand among both boys and girls. The function of such a collection will be, as Mr. A. W. Richards has said, "to

serve as an aid in keeping the hand work and constructive activities warm with the motives, sentiments, and intelligence associated with the arts and industries."

The admiration of children for physical bravery is merely another aspect of their respect for those who do. The literature which tells of brave deeds of the past has been most prominent in the selection of books which should not only interest children but cultivate virtue. It hardly seems necessary to mention the present-day heroes of peace who are quite as worthy the admiration of children. Just as the modern artist finds the spirit of romance in the construction of the Panama canal and in the mills of Pittsburgh, so the modern writer presents the romance of labor, of the fight against disease, fire, and crime. The older heroes fought dragons and giants. There is as much romance today in the fight against less tangible forms of evil. Few books of this sort have been written but some are available. While we do not want to banish the old fighting heroes, it is just as well to emphasize moral bravery.

Besides the romance of modern life, it is recognized today that the natural world has a romance all its own, which may be presented in books without any of the sentimentality characteristic of many of the nature books.

In determining the wholesomeness of books for children the law of apperception will help to classify conclusions. Children see in stories only what they are looking for, and they look for those things which a limited social experience and their own natures dictate.

The chief requirement is that the book ring true; that the disgust aroused be for that which ought to be hated, and the admiration for that which ought to be admired. Many books of a high literary quality do not pass this test, but some which describe persons and things not desirable in themselves do pass it. For example, books in which there may be some incidental mention of sex are often withheld. This concern for the child's sophistication is not always necessary. City children are likely to be more sophisticated than the children's librarian. As for other children, if the emotions inspired by the book are those which a civilized person ought to have, it will probably do them little harm.⁷

When children are inspired by bravery, the amount of incidental bloodshed which accompanies the heroism is a matter of indifference to them. Children's librarians have often bought revisions of the classics under the impression that the incidents are not good for children to read, because they are unpleasant. If the hero is of sufficient stature ethically, he may be admitted to the child's imaginative life; he can hardly outdo in gory adventure the creations of the child's own brain.

The poor ethics of some of the old legends and folk tales have also troubled those responsible for children's reading. Lying, cheating, deceiving, and trickery are common in fairy tales. When they are the main business of the story, there is doubt whether they should be read by children. Usually, however, bravery, cheerfulness, kindness, goodness are the virtues which oc-

⁷ The distinctions in the case of novels are well stated in Bacon, *What makes a novel immoral*. Rev. ed. 1914. 24pp. They are equally cogent in the case of books for children.



cupy the spotlight, and hold the child's attention. When this is not true, the story had better be disapproved. Ethics does not come to any great extent from books in the early years of childhood. The virtues are cultivated first by experience in the family and then socially in the neighborhood. "Many of the pleas for literature as moral salvation seem purely sentimental." Fairy tales present individual virtues which remain virtues for all time; social virtues are a later development for both children and race. This is the position taken by those who hold the culture epoch theory of children's development, which is in short that the child goes through the stages of civilization experienced by the race. Thus literature belonging to the earlier periods of civilization is well suited to early childhood, provided the tale be a genuine folk product and not a manufactured article. It is not necessary that a form of literature ideal for cultivating imagination and presenting the primary virtues should teach more than one virtue at a time.

As they grow older, children develop strong practical interests. Curiosity about outdoor life characterizes the middle period of childhood. The adolescent interests seem but a development of this longing to know more about the world, translated into terms of the romance of adventure, or the romance of science and industry. Because of lack of knowledge of the adolescent's psychology both library and school have failed to meet his needs.

It has been thought that because girls read love

* Carpenter, *The teaching of English*, 162 (1903).

stories, their craving for romance can be satisfied only by that type of literature. As a matter of fact, differences in taste are largely artificial. Girls are brought up according to adult ideas of what they ought to like and do. Early in life, they are urged to be "ladylike" and informed as to the things they must learn to care for. In case a girl rebels, she is called a "tom-boy." One cannot wonder that the strait jacket put on by parents and society has given us a girl problem. Very likely the tastes of girls would not be so different from those of boys if they were given a chance to develop naturally. In a world where there are so many innocent things inexplicably "not nice" for her to do, say, or be interested in, a girl's taste can find almost no other satisfaction than in the love story. The librarian should not take it for granted that girls will not read other kinds of books if they have the chance.

These subtle psychological differences of sex may not exist at all, or only to a small degree. We cannot eliminate from the girl's life all the activities natural to both kinds of young human animal and expect her to react in the same manner as a boy. "After a round century of discussion and investigation, the real crux of . . . the question is still whether some of the so-called secondary and all of the so-called tertiary sex characteristics are inherent and relatively permanent, or whether they are merely temporary variations due to environmental and social causes. . . . Are the peculiarities comprised in what is called 'femininity' and 'masculinity' equally fixed? For a good many hundred years it has been assumed that they were unal-

terable, but the discoveries in biology and the rise of democratic theory have together undermined this as well as many other dogmas."⁹ Furthermore "the point to be emphasized is that according to our present light, the psychological differences of sex seem to be largely due not to difference of average capacity nor to difference in type of mental activity, but to the difference in the social influences brought to bear on the developing individual from early infancy to adult years."¹⁰

Because of all this subconscious feeling about girls, books for girls are the least convincing and wholesome. So much has been taken away from the girls' interests, that what remains can hardly fail to be silly and vapid, just as the girls' heads have been filled with false notions of life and reality. Curiously enough, it is the well brought up girl of American parents who presents the most difficult problem, because it is for her that the girls' books—weak, sentimental and snobbish—are bought.

After the child has been studied in relation to his environment and the appropriate psychological laws applied, the problem of book selection is only half solved. There are still the books to be considered, and most of them fail to meet the requirements of the situation. Fairy tales, myths, and legends, have undergone re-writing at the hands of tender-minded persons, fearful of a variety of harm from the originals. Other seek to convert into infants' food, masterpieces written for adults. Adaptations are to be looked upon with suspi-

⁹ Coolidge, *Why women are so*, 302 (1912).

¹⁰ Thompson, *Mental traits of sex*, 182 (1903).

cion, for they frequently take away strength and substitute nothing. Nor can the re-written novel or extracts from it be recommended. The child can afford to wait until he can appreciate the original. Nothing can be more deplorable than this attempt to re-write what was intended to be an artistic whole, no matter how charming a book is the result. As Mrs. Wetmore says, "The Boy's Charlemagne, the Child's Shakespeare, The World, The Flesh, and The Devil boiled down into Liebig's or Armour's Extract of literature is the pabulum administered in sterilized capsules. . . . Only the children of the very poor are allowed to see life face to face."¹¹

There are, however, translations, or versions in modern English, of classics such as the *Odyssey*, the *Faerie Queene*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Morte d'Arthur* which are well adapted to children, especially if read aloud. The books to be cautious about are the modern re-written versions in which the poor quality of the text is helped out by handsome illustrations. Such titles occur again and again in lists of children's books.

Usually the modern adaptations of folk-lore and tales of fancy are equally ill-suited to children because they lack the naïve simplicity of the old tales. There are one or two exceptions, such as *Alice in Wonderland* and *Stockton's Fanciful Tales*. *Andersen's Tales* are of sufficient literary quality, but not all of them are interesting to children. Worse than the poorly written version of the old fairy tale, is the modern fairy story

¹¹ Bialand, *At the sign of the hobby horse*, 72, 95 (1910).

book, which is characterized by profuse illustrations, imagination of a sort, although a poor sort, little literary merit, and a general cheapness and gaudiness in tone which often verges on vulgarity. Such books are numerous. Some are bought by libraries, many by parents, thereby creating a demand which is felt in the library. Generally speaking, the modern fairy tale ought to be avoided in buying books for children. There are plenty of good collections of the old favorites.

Another trap set for the unwary librarian is the series. As far back as 1865, the ladies' commission on children's books¹² had discovered the insidious nature of the series. The first book is usually fairly good, but the succeeding volumes get weaker as the tales progress, and the perplexed librarian, in an effort to be both conscientious and consistent, finds herself torn in twain. Even the first book is hardly worth buying, and to start is like getting on a toboggan. You can't stop. The series become a habit with the children, and where to draw the line is never settled. Characters follow each other through one book after another, at least one always being retained as a cue for the next book. Most public libraries have banished the Elsie Dinsmore, the Oliver Optic, the Harry Castleman, and the Horatio Alger series. Whether there has been any gain in substituting a different kind of series is an open question.

Series written for girls are the poorest of their kind. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that almost all fiction written for girls is entirely hopeless from either the

¹² See Chapter Two.

literary or ethical standpoint. The heroines are impossibly rich, or good, or bright, or beautiful. Most of the long series for girls reek with snobbishness and admiration for wealth, and when the remarkable heroine is not slangy or obsessed with worldly ideas, she is impossibly goody-goody, with a tendency to reform her parents and other older people within her reach. Even the books which present fairly human characters and in which the atmosphere is wholesome, are insipid and have nothing special to recommend them. The greatest harm they do is to prevent the girl who reads them from becoming interested in the great novels of the world, which would naturally appeal to her in the adolescent period. "Careful" mothers try to keep love-stories from their growing daughters, but it is impossible to believe that girls could get any more harm from novels written for grown-ups, than from the modern girl's book.

Many librarians find it difficult to refuse to buy sets of books which are published by a reputable house. There are a number of these which contain selections of both prose and verse of irreproachable character, but children's librarians have various reasons for thinking them unsuited to public library use.¹² Some of these reasons are: (1) The material—fairy stories, poetry, legends, myths, adaptations from novels—is already in the library in more convenient form. (2) The set is expensive for the small library. For the large children's room, it probably has value for the reference department. (3) A single volume cannot be replaced

¹² Woods, *Sets for children. Public Libraries*. 18: 138-41 (1913).

without buying the whole set. (4) Children should be taught to read whole classics and not selections or adaptations. (5) Sets of books bound alike lose individuality, and do not appeal to real book lovers or to children.

Prominent among the available book supply are the books about children. If they are true to life, they present children's standards as to right and wrong, and not adult standards. This is especially true of school stories. If they are false and unnatural, as they frequently are, they are neither moral nor literature. As hero-worshippers, children need grown up characters to admire. A book with only child interests can scarcely be expected to be other than petty, narrow, and belittling. The school-boy-and-girl stories present ethical standards which belong to a school-boy-and-girl world rather than to the real world. School-girl stories, if they are real, are concerned with clothes, money, and boys. We know the interests of the adolescent girl, and there seems to be every reason why she should be removed from the atmosphere in which she daily lives, at least for the time during which she is lost in the pages of a book. Why glorify the silly age by making fiction of it, and then handing it to the silly ones themselves to read? The adolescent girl is looking for romance and love stories. Better to give her the world's great love stories about men and women than have her make heroes and heroines of boys and girls as immature as herself.

One of the latest developments in the production of boys' books of adventure is the reprinting of old dime-

novels by reputable firms. A publisher writes, "I have on my desk today one of these cheap books and with it a half dime novel in paper published in 1901 of which it is a reprint. The good people who freely buy the cloth bound book would be very much shocked if it were suggested that they should give their sons the paper novel." Librarians have not cooperated very successfully with publishers, but their interests are not unlike. Both wish to make book lovers of children. The far-sighted publisher realizes that by giving children the cheap series, he is undermining his own future business, because the children who read this sort of book do not become buyers of good books. Similarly, the far-sighted librarian recognizes that in providing quantities of juvenile literature, she does not lead children to better reading but condemns them to mediocrity. Even the publisher of the paper bound books has begun to supply technical material, in response to the interests of the modern boy. The patron of the children's room will not learn to love literature from reading a mass of harmless but feeble books, and he may be hindered from learning the best use of the library.

The juvenile book should be at least a work of art in itself. If it is, it will appeal to adults as well as children. Few children's books come up to this standard, and there is reason to believe that adult books will have to be substituted eventually for much of the juvenile literature.

The protest against books written especially for children was heard as early as 1844: "When creative

power and simple grandeur were extinct it became necessary to make books professedly and especially for the entertainment of children, a sort of industry never enough to be deplored. Follows a race of faultless, theatrical, preaching papas and mamas, aunts and children. . . . If you wish your child to grow tall and erect do you confine him in a room the ceiling of which is exactly as high as his head? If you wish his body to unfold itself and acquire bulk and vigor do you swathe it in tight bandages? The only books from which we can really learn, says Goethe, are those we cannot judge. The author of a book which we are capable of judging must learn of us."¹⁴ It is not necessary that children understand all they read, when they read for pleasure. Occasional stretching is as good for brain as for muscles. Childhood naturally reaches out to the world of grown-ups. In the olden days the children came in with dessert at the evening meal, and heard the rich and racy happenings of the day; "surely a wholesome training," remarks Miss Godfrey in her *English Children in the Olden Time*, "and one that bore better fruit than the incessant contemplation of the infinitely small affairs of the nursery, of the storms in teacups, the morbid misunderstandings in nutshells which occupy the small minds of today."

Easy reading must be provided, of course, for half-grown foreigners, but such readers will often find children's books distasteful. The publications used in the schools for presenting history, civics, and biography, and simple poetry such as Longfellow's, are better

¹⁴ Anti Peter Parleyism. *Living Age*, 296 (1844).

fitted than children's books for the use of those who are learning English.

Thoughtful librarians recognize some of the objections to juvenile books, but they feel that it is well to have a few in order to attract the children. Do the children thus attracted read better books later on? Is it impossible to appeal to a street boy who is used to exciting stories, and incidents, except by a book of a little better grade than those he reads outside the library? Has there been sufficient test of the attractive power of history, biography, and technical books and periodicals? The Newark public library has used adult books in the children's room, and in the Cleveland public library an intensive study of adult books for children was made by the staff, and such books as were approved were added to the children's collection.

Another variety of book which appears on almost all library lists seems to be there for no other than historical and sentimental reasons. These are the early children's books which reflect contemporary educational, political, and social philosophy. While some of them have the human touch, as a class they are out of sympathy with the modern point of view. "The good old times" and the admirable children who lived in them appear to better advantage at a distance. In any event, there are few modern children, however regrettable the fact, who will spontaneously enjoy the Rollo books, Sanford and Merton, etc. With characteristic humor, Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote of the Rollo books in 1866, "These works are invaluable to fathers; by keeping always one volume in advance of

his oldest son a man can stand before the household an encyclopedia of every practical art. . . . Does a child reach some height of virtue hitherto unattainable? His mother presents him with a bradawl." The glimpses of contemporary New England make enjoyable reading for adults because of all such manners and customs represent.

Maria Edgeworth wrote in a spirit of revolt against fairy tales and all that imaginative literature which is considered so important today. She stood for the contemporary rationalistic and utilitarian movement, and her books were intended as a guide to parents in bringing up their children rather than for the recreation of the children. The virtues set forth are of a rather commonplace and utilitarian sort. "Don't seize a tart, and your kind aunt will give you the largest one on the dish." Early Protestant religion had a decided time-serving element, and this system of rewards and punishments coincided with the religious teaching of the time.

In all of Maria Edgeworth's stories which deal with the poor appear the social theories and the individualistic philosophy of Rousseau, whose teaching, now discredited, the Edgeworths had absorbed. It may be a healthy instinct, which makes the American child shun the Edgeworthian model children and parents, whose social ideals are so different from our own.

As for Mrs. Barbauld and Mrs. Trimmer, we wonder at the wrath of the gentle Lamb who wrote to Coleridge, "Hang them! I mean this cursed Barbauld crew, those blights and blasts of all that is human in

man and child." There is still a vestige of these "practical" stories, but the better thought of the day is that information should be conveyed to a child honestly and without disguise. If it is what he wants to know, and he wants to know almost everything, he will not need the ineffectual sugar-coating such literature is intended to provide.

A thorough trial of biography, history, poetry, and travel not written for children has yet to be made in the children's room. Travel such as has been written by Sven Hedin and Henry M. Stanley and biography like Booker T. Washington's and Jacob Riis' are enjoyed by children. Such books as those of Alice Morse Earle and Clifton Johnson are of interest to children, and they are better than the inaccurate and poorly written juvenile history. Traditions long ago exposed as fakes are perpetuated in many of the children's history books. Thus children are still reading as facts such discredited tales as the rescue of Capt. John Smith by Pocahontas and the saving of Oregon by Marcus Whitman. When such stories are told as legends, there can be no objection to their use.

Very few of the travel books written for children are worth while. Many of the travel series now so widely advertised are uneven in merit, comparing volume for volume, and often seem to depend for their appeal on their pictures.

Much of the poetry written for children lacks distinction. A love of poetry may be cultivated by reading aloud either by the child himself or by some older person. Some of the tests for poetry suitable for children as suggested in the course on children's literature



compiled by members of the Newark public library staff are:¹⁸ Is it musical? Does it avoid sentimentality? Does it avoid excess of emotion? Does it appeal to the imagination? Is it simple in thought and construction. A love of poetry may be cultivated by reading? Does it help the child to see beautiful pictures and to sympathize with experiences outside the range of his own life, to feel nobly and to act rightly? Longfellow's and Whittier's complete poems are usually found in the children's room, and there are a number of good anthologies.

The purely imaginative animal story which is avowedly fiction has its place in the child's education, and is useful when there is no pretense of presenting scientific facts. For other books on science, the Newark course gives the following tests: Is it the accurate record of the author's observation? Is the style clear and entertaining? Is it suitably dignified, free from sentimentality and condescension to the child mind? Is the human element in motive and conduct introduced to such a degree as to sacrifice accuracy to the story interest? Are the descriptions accurate and the directions clear? The romance in natural things does not lie in the method of presentation, as so many writers for children seem to imagine, but in the processes themselves, and these can be explained in simple language. The purpose of a nature book should be to make the reader observant. If the story interest is predominant,

¹⁸ Course of study for normal school pupils on literature for children, by Julia S. Harron, Corinne Bacon and J. C. Dana. 1912. 134p.; Same, *Multigraphs* used in the course. 55p. Gives a list of good lists of children's books.

such an object is defeated. It is unnecessary to make frogs, bees, wasps, ants and butterflies talk and act like human beings in order to interest children in their doings.

In considering picture books, the librarian will be repaid by a study of the despised comic supplement. There is a striking likeness between the "funny sheet" and the Slovenly Peter of Dr. Hoffman. Both satisfy the demand of the child that the pictures be within his own experience. The colors are primary, and there is almost no perspective. The comic sheet should find a formidable rival in the library, and it should be the object of librarians to reform the pictures rather than to ignore them or try to abolish them. The situation cannot improve so long as librarians do nothing except bar them from the children's room, under the impression that they thus prevent the children from seeing Mutt and Jeff and Relentless Rudolph. By taking concerted action and giving hearty support and approval to those newspapers which approach a better standard, librarians might accomplish something constructive.

Illustrated editions and beautiful picture books multiply as a result of adult demand rather than desire or need of children. The aesthetic picture books, which are so pleasing to their elders, may have little effect upon children. "We do not yet know," remarks a teacher, "to what extent the illustration helps the mental imagery of the reader or to what extent it may hinder it."¹⁸ Foreign picture books are generally

¹⁸ Laing, *The child and the book*. *Elementary School Teacher*. 10: 24 (1909).

better than ours. There is a notable group of English illustrators of whom the older ones are Tenniel, Caldecott, Crane and Kate Greenaway, and the more recent Rackham, W. H. Robinson, Billingham and the principal illustrators of the Lang fairy books, Ford Hood, and Speed. Buck perpetuates the style of Caldecott, which is similar to that of Hugh Thomson. Boutet de Monvel is well known as a master of illustration for children.

In order to make the library a factor in the movement for vocational training and guidance, leaders in vocational and trade education and the large employers of young wage-earners must necessarily be consulted. A complete set of the publications of the best correspondence schools will attract boys, and help their vague ambitions to become concrete. The trade and technical periodicals, which represent the manufacturing interests of the community by means of book reviews furnish guidance in buying books for vocational aids.

As a method of evaluating books for children, nothing in this country approaches for thoroughness and scientific exactitude the work of the German book committees. In 1893, Paul Ziegler of Berlin founded the periodical *Jugendschriftenwarte*, in which juvenile literature is criticized upon psychological, pedagogical, and aesthetic grounds. Under the leadership of Heinrich Wolgast of Hamburg, twenty-six committees representing different sections of Germany and composed chiefly of school teachers and school librarians, were organized in 1900. By 1906 the com-

mittees numbered seventy-eight, representing wage-earners, social workers, and students of folk-lore. Each book is independently reviewed by three members of the local committee. The final vote (yes or no) is forwarded to central headquarters. All three must agree, and in the event of one member dissenting, another reads the book in order to cast the deciding vote. The numbers of the *Jugendschriften-warte* contain the titles already read, with a few of the deciding votes given, a brief summary of plot and reasons for discharging or accepting. An entry from a current number of the paper is as follows:

Burnett, *The little lord*—tr. by M. de Scholley-Joelson. Black and white pictures by Moest. 238pp. Price 210m. P. Sollors. . . 1912. 11 yes. 8 no.

This book is already in the catalogue in another edition. We are thereby agreed, notwithstanding considerable doubt concerning its contents, and this is directed against the manner in which the writer at the end abandons an important question to an unhappy accident. It would have been best in an adaptation to leave out the story of the wrong heir altogether. The book would thereby have been poorer by a sensation but infinitely richer in poetic worth. But that would not be our reason for rejecting it. Over against this failing stands the excellence of its child psychology. Burnett has set forth with great tenderness how successfully the loving ways of the little lord, easily and unknown to himself, transform the misanthropic old man. What makes it necessary for us to reject this edition is the strange idea of the translator of translating the American child English into Austrian dialect. This, it seems to us is impossible without harm to the poetic charm. Also there are a succession of North German expressions entirely unintelligible. Rejected.

Each Christmas season, a gift catalogue compiled from the numbers of the periodical is published.

Beautifully illustrated and expensive editions are included as well as popular editions and reprints with good paper and illustrations.

To Herr Wolgast belongs the credit for the enthusiasm and persistence necessary to start and maintain such an organization. In two of his published writings, *Das Elend unserer Jugendliteratur* and *Vom Kinderbuche*, he has given his ideas of the principles which ought to govern the selection of books for children:

1. Books for a child should be complete works of art.
2. If the book cannot be enjoyed by the child at an early age, do not destroy unity by boiling it down but let him wait for it. All prose or children's editions of famous poems are unnecessary and inartistic.
3. Great men did not read juvenile books.
4. Grown ups should be able to enjoy the book as much as the child. *Alice in Wonderland* is a classic example of a book read as much by adults as by children.
5. A work of art must not be made a vehicle for moral sermons and propaganda.
6. Educational editions are condemned.
7. Experiment will show at what age children can best read certain books. Do not force them. The young reading child is abnormal in any case.
8. We do not want reading for the sake of reading; not a reading child but a reading adult.
9. Only over the best of its kind is it worth while to spend time and money.
10. Dangers of sensational fiction.

11. In judging picture books or illustrated Christmas editions, the committees demand, (a) pictures simply drawn, full of poetic feeling, and decorative design; (b) picture and text agreeing; (c) colored pictures preferred, but black and white rather than poor colored, and better none than poor pictures of any sort.

Adopting these principles, the organization has been remarkably successful in influencing not only the purchase, but also the publication and sometimes the writing of good books. Cooperation has been sought with all societies interested in the preservation of folk literature, and pressure has been brought to bear on the authors of children's books. Opposition to the work of the committees has developed among religious and political reactionaries, who suspect anything advocated by the teaching force of being socialistic.

There has been no such concerted action in the United States, although a protest on the part of librarians as to the poor bindings of children's books has not been without effect upon publishers, several of whom produce special library editions, sewed with tapes and with pictures firmly inserted in the binding.¹⁷ The only plan for influencing the sale and distribution of juvenile books which seems to have within it the germ of success is now being tried out by the Boy Scouts of America. The library commission of this organization, composed of three leading librar-

¹⁷ In 1900 a committee of the American library association was appointed to consider the feasibility of a cooperative scheme for evaluating children's books and printing lists of those approved, but nothing came of it.

ians, has already supervised the publication of a list of books which is contained in the Boy Scouts' hand book. The selected books are specially bound with the Boy Scout official stamp on the cover. They include standard reference books relating to the outdoor interests of the scout, and the best known story books. The compilers have borne in mind the boys' actual interest in stories of adventure, in "what and how to do" books, and in information of all sorts. If the books listed are read by the boys, it will be because the compilers have thought it most practical to try to improve the boy's reading by starting out with the books he likes instead of the books they want him to like.

Printing and size and kind of type are matters of concern to the librarian, on account of their close relation to the hygiene of the eye. Whether paper is glazed or not also has some bearing on the same subject. Dull finished paper tending to yellow in color rather than dead white, is the best for children's eyes. Close inter-lineage is hard on the eyes. A newspaper column is about the right length of line. The standard measurements for type, lines, and leading, according to the child's age are as follows:

First year in school—type should be 2.6 mm.; width of leading 4.5. Second and third year type should be 2 mm.; width of leading 4 mm. Fourth year type should be 1.8 mm.; width of leading 3.6 mm.

There should be .75 mm. between two letters of the same word; .2 mm. between adjacent words; and 2.5 to 3 mm. between lines.

For the small library of limited means, Miss Caroline Burnite, supervisor of children's work in the Cleveland public library has given some practical suggestions for book purchasing:

1. Set aside a definite sum for children's books.
2. Study inexpensive editions (book lists are good for editions).
3. Consider the cultural and school side of the library's function.
4. For the sake of the discount buy all the books at the same time. They can be put on the shelves a few at a time.
5. Buy a few beautifully illustrated editions of the classics.
6. Always specify editions in ordering.

One might add to this that only those books should be chosen which the librarian is able successfully to use with children. Children's rooms are overburdened with books chosen from lists.

Advertisements, book reviews, or lists must be used in caution in buying books for children. Most Sunday school libraries and not a few public libraries buy from advertisements or from publishers' lists, which amount to the same thing.

Book reviews in even the most respectable periodicals and newspapers are not to be trusted. Whereas the standards for judging all other publications may be exacting, those for testing the worth of a "juvenile" are likely to be erratic.

Periodicals for children are generally quite as inferior as the books. Half grown boys do not care

for the children's room if all they can find there are St. Nicholas, The Youth's Companion, and picture books. There are a number of excellent technical periodicals desirable for boys. Such magazines as Popular Mechanics, Popular Electricity, Technical World, Scientific American, Illustrated London News, and World's Work can be used to advantage. Just why it should be necessary for a small child to have a magazine has never been satisfactorily explained. The periodicals for little children are generally utterly rapid.

Everything indicates that the production of books written especially for children is the high water mark of the sentimental attitude toward childhood. One feature of the reconstructive period will be the development of a point of view that regards childhood only as a transition state. We cannot feed our young people on mental mush and expect much from them from then later. Teeth do not become strong through a prolonged diet of infants' food, and minds as well as stomachs are built for the reception of solid fare.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

SOME SOCIAL ASPECTS OF LIBRARY WORK WITH CHILDREN

There are two phases of the work of the public library as a social agency; the one intensive, the other extensive, The latter phase, being the more obvious, is often considered as more distinctly social in its influence. The social and economic significance of the library service to rural districts has already been discussed at some length. The traveling library of the state becomes the home library of the city.

A home library is a collection of books placed in homes at a distance from the library and circulated among small groups of children in the immediate neighborhood. The idea originated with Mr. Charles Birtwell of the children's aid society of Boston in 1887. In the routine work of the society, the visitors saw many homes without books. Cases containing a few books suitable for children were placed in these homes; and the small libraries served as centers for study groups or clubs. Each week the visitor read aloud, played games with the children, unlocked the cases, and distributed books. Upon the records of the society were noted the character of the family the occupations of the different members, and the reading matter found in the home. Membership in the club

was sometimes continued well into adult years. As the clubs were outgrown, the members were directed to the public library.

In making this plan a part of public library extension work, the local charity workers should be consulted. The children may not need a home library. They like to "belong," and some have been known to have library cards in several different organizations and to patronize a home library as well.

In Washington, the public library chooses the books for the home library collections and the visitor is furnished by the associated charities. The books are given first to one family from whom the suggestions as to their circulating among the neighbors is allowed to come. The Carnegie library of Pittsburgh and the public library of Cleveland use the home library to reach children in outlying districts. These libraries furnish the volunteer visitors, but on the whole it seems desirable that the visitor be a person trained in social work, since the meeting with the children of the group and the knowledge of the neighborhood are more important than library training. Whether the home library is conducted by the library or by a charity society, a study of the city map should be made and the libraries located as nearly as possible in the isolated sections.

Some of the libraries of the Boston children's aid society were given by parents in memory of a child. This is also the case in the Grand Rapids public library, which has received an endowment for memorial libraries to be sent out to crippled children and to

those who are recovering from non-contagious diseases. In some cities home libraries are under the supervision of the public recreation commission, and library assistants are asked to give out books and to tell stories to the children.

Organized play is a recognized part of the educational process, as well as a recreational factor in the lives of city children. Some of the activities of the playground are closely allied to the literary arts. Ballads and folk songs accompany the work and play of primitive people; and the relation between folk dances and festivals and the literature of early childhood is close.¹ Books sent to the playground should stimulate the children's interest in what they are doing. Picture books for the younger children and books to keep the older ones out of mischief as they rest, are included in the collections. Stories are told to children on the playground, either by library assistants or the play supervisors; in many cities the play supervisor having special training which includes storytelling.

Many social settlements have libraries for children. In Cleveland such libraries are under the supervision of the public library, either as sub-branches or deposit stations. Institutions for deaf and dumb children or the blind usually have libraries of their own. The reading of the deaf forms the larger part of their education. The library at the Minnesota school for the deaf contains a large variety of adult books besides children's books. The cost of books for the

¹ See Chubb, *Festivals and plays*, 201 (1912).

blind has prevented most public libraries from doing much in the way of furnishing them either to individuals or to institutions. The public libraries in Cleveland, Philadelphia, and New York have departments which supply books to the blind, and there is also such a department in the Library of Congress.

Before the library undertakes extension work which may overlap that of other agencies, a survey might well be made of the community in which books are to be distributed. When social surveys are made they necessarily include the economic and industrial conditions, and other salient factors which affect the lives of children and adults. No two communities are alike or present the same problems. It is the tendency at present to inaugurate no reform movements without a detailed study of the facts as a basis for constructive action. Surveys of towns or cities are made most frequently for the promotion of social and political efficiency, and the library can hardly be a vital part of the life of any community until a library survey is made. Such a study would be of importance in planning the work of the children's room; it is essential for the conduct of effective extension work. The work for children as carried on in many libraries is likely to be sentimental and unscientific; conclusions may be drawn from insufficient data without a consideration of all the conditions which affect the children's need of books; the masses of children reached may seem to make up for the lack of definite information concerning their individual reading habits and interests.

Therefore, a survey to determine the reading habits and facilities in the home and the reading resources of a community is essential to the performance of a library's educational functions.³ Facts along these lines are often obtainable through social and industrial surveys. The library might also make use of the statistical material from such sources as the publications of the United States census bureau; the state census bureau, if any; the state board of education; the state factory inspector; the state bureau of labor, if any; the local and state boards of health; the local board of education; the state bureau of statistics; and the local charity agencies. In a large city, the figures and facts concerning children will include much more, but even in smaller communities various pertinent facts may be discovered from the above sources. The nature of statistics differs greatly as between states and as between towns in the same state, but generally speaking the librarian should be able to ascertain the number of children classified according to age, school attendance, and employment. In addition, he can get the names of children who receive employment certificates, those in special industries, the number and generally the causes of juvenile arrests, and the findings of the local charity agencies. With the result before her she can answer such questions as:

³ See Johnston, *Library work and the public schools*. Public Libraries. 20: 457-60 (1915); Gillette, *Culture agencies of a typical manufacturing group*; South Chicago. Chicago. 1901. 66p.; What boys and girls do when they do as they please. Leaflet showing three charts used at Rochester child welfare exhibit, April 5-12, 1913; also in Rochester public library, Report. 1913, 11, 17, 20; Library Journal, 38: 344-5 (1913).

What proportion of the children of reading age is being reached by this library?

Does the library have more card holders among children between the ages of eight and twelve, than among those between the ages of twelve and sixteen?

Is this library in its choice of books meeting the actual needs of the various classes of working children as shown by this investigation?

Is the collection of literature of such a nature as to appeal to the children of the community, considering their interests, their environment, and the amusements to which they are accustomed?

Motion picture shows sometimes give pictures based upon novels. What is the quality of these pictures? Do they affect the circulation of the books which they represent? Is it desirable that these books be read by children? For example, in an investigation made in Cleveland one teacher reported, "they seem to inspire them to read books, study history; to interest them in reading good books such as Julius Caesar and As You Like It." Another says, "They seem to establish ideals of travel, history, Bible history, commercial geography, and heroic deeds." "By far the greater number of children speak of the good things seen at the picture theaters—subjects relating to history, geography, literature, and industry."⁸

As a result of an investigation of motion picture shows conducted by a teacher of one of the Spring-

⁸ Bartholomew, Report of motion pictures . . . of Cleveland, 26-27 (1913).

field (Mass.) high school,⁴ the conclusion was reached that on the whole the pictures did not encourage reading, although many pupils reported that they had been thus lead to read standard works. Most of the high school pupils liked the presentation of books and plays better than other kinds of pictures, and many reported that they had been helped in history, geography, and literature. The pictures which seemed to make the greatest impression, however, were those which represented the old, familiar dime novel incidents, which as Mr. Willard points out, were followed closely by Stevenson.

The answers to questions such as these are also important to the librarian:

What other sources of reading matter than the library are available to children? What is the nature of this reading matter?

How many of the library's juvenile readers buy books at the five and ten-cent stores? In other words, what agencies are competing with the library on its own ground? If the competition is successful, why?

Is it easier and pleasanter to put down five cents and get a gaudily covered tale than to go to the library and get a card?

What influence does the library exert among the children of the leisure class?

Is any attempt made to interest parents of this class in the best books for children, either through

⁴Willard, *The motion picture theater and the child*. Education, 35: 350-61 (1915).

the local book dealer, or by means of lists? If such efforts are made, do they have any appreciable effect?

Publishers and booksellers can give valuable information as to the reading habits of children, especially half-grown boys. The dime and nickel novel publisher is suffering from the competition of the motion picture theaters. An author of "thrillers" was quoted as follows by the Boy Scout librarian at the American booksellers' convention, 1915:⁵ "The decline of Shorty Muldoon, Jimmy Grimes, Jack Wright, Nick Carter, and other heroes is not due to iconoclasts, but to the moving picture shows, which have ruined their sales. Connected with a publishing house which was responsible for many of these old time stories, and writing a part of some of them, I am in a position to know the reason, as I suffered, as have many writers, from the inroads of the movies.' This is not cheerful news for librarians, who had hoped that their efforts to diminish the demand for the cheap story were helpful. The fact is that the same boy who is getting as many books a week as he can from the public library may also go to the "movies," and buy reprints of "thrillers." When an effective substitute is given to the boy, booksellers always report a decrease in the sale of the nickel weekly.⁶ Is the public library providing effective substitutes? Has the librarian information which will enable her to

⁵ Mathews, *Books as merchandise and something more. Publishers' Weekly*, 87: 1487-8 (1915).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1489.



WHAT BOYS AND GIRLS DO

When they do as they please

THREE CHARTS

Showing how boys and girls spend their
leisure time. Their hobbies and
their favorite recreations

Prepared for the Rochester (N. Y.) Child Wel-
fare Exhibit, April 5-12, 1913. Repro-
duced in this volume thru the Courtesy
of the Rochester Public Library



BOYS' HOBBIES

933 ROCHESTER BOYS
say they have the following hobbies

Farming	-	1%
Science	-	1%
Machinery	—	2%
Music	—	2%
Engineering	—	2%
No hobby	—	2%
Unusual	=====	5%
Photography	=====	4%
Art	=====	7%
Collections	=====	10%
Pets	=====	15%
Woodworking	=====	15%
Electricity	=====	15%
Reading	=====	19%

279 other boys interested in outdoor sports.

Should it not be 100% interested in
outdoor sports and some hobby?

WHAT ROCHESTER GIRLS WANT

Answers received from 273 girls
between the ages of 15 and 20,
representing ten factories and eight
churches scattered throughout the city.

Their
favorite
recreation.



Their choice in Motion Pictures

COMIC	32%
EDUCATIONAL	25%
ADVENTURE	22%
SENTIMENT	20%
ALL KINDS	14%
NO ANSWER	7%

NEARLY $\frac{1}{3}$ ATTEND DANCE HALLS.

NEARLY $\frac{1}{2}$ BELONG TO CLUBS.

$\frac{1}{2}$ of the others would like to belong
but haven't the chance.

What are we going to do about it ?

WHAT CHILDREN DO

One Monday in February 1913, 1500 school children wrote unsigned compositions about 'what they did on Saturday and Sunday.' This is the Childrens own statement of activities mentioned.



BOYS

GIRLS

SPEND NEARLY 1/4 OF THEIR TIME READING.

WHAT KIND OF BOOKS DOES YOUR CHILD READ?

assert that the library is in successful competition with these outside agencies? If not, what will it avail her or any other educator, if only the boys who already prefer good reading are using the books in the library? As the Scout librarian remarks, boys, like that eternal boy, Robert Louis Stevenson, read story books "not for the eloquence or character or thought, but for some quality of the brute incident," which is conspicuous in the cheap newspaper, "movie," and paper back. It is a fact, established by the surveys so far conducted, that the books of the "underground library" are as influential as those circulated by public means.⁷ Even if the greatest percentage of spare time is devoted by children to reading⁸ such a fact can scarcely be a matter of congratulation considering some of the sources of supply.

Turning to the case of the working children, the librarian may ask:

What are the technical, mechanical, and industrial interests of the boys and girls?

Are these interests being stimulated or ignored by the library?

What kind of children are brought into the juvenile courts?

Haven any of them ever been to the library?

What are their tastes?

⁷ Mathews, *Blowing out the boy's brains*. Outlook. 108: 652-4 (1914); Rochester public library. Report, 1913, 17.

⁸ See "What 1500 school children did between Friday and the following Monday" and "The hobbies of 933 boys." Three charts used at Rochester child welfare exhibit, April 5-12, 1913, in Rochester Public library. Report, 1913, 11, 17.

Does the library reach any of the children who do not work in factories; those who do piece work at home, for example?

What are the tastes and aptitudes of this class?

What steps can the library take to meet these tastes?

The Survey tells of a boy of a mechanical turn of mind who was summoned to the juvenile court because he had taken to pieces an automobile not his own in order to find the use of a piece of junk which he had saved his money to buy. Little by little he was buying old automobile parts, but this piece he could not fit into its proper place. Could this boy have received the information he wanted in a library? Since he did not go to one, he had probably never thought of it in that connection, or never heard of it at all. Does the children's room attract boys of this type?

Constructive information may be gained from philanthropic agencies or from the library's own investigations, which may answer such questions as these:

If the children read comic supplements on Sunday, is it because they can get nothing else?

Is the library closed to children on Sunday?

What are the recreational conditions for children?

What are the home conditions?

What kind of books do the children most frequently steal from the library?

What is the relative sophistication of the children? Often they are more wordly wise than the children's librarian, and yet she is inclined to fancy that she is

protecting them by excluding books which to her seem gory, tragic, or too realistic.

To some extent books must be selected according to the character and needs of the children to be served not according to an adult's academic notion of an "average" child, or according to her remembrance of her own childish taste. As Mr. E. L. Pearson has said, the children's librarian was never a boy. It is likely that she was never the kind of girl with whom she may have to deal in the library. The results of the efforts of the Boy Scouts' organization to evaluate books for boys, will be observed with interest by librarians. No other agency has the first-hand knowledge of boys' reading and what they will read under proper direction, and surely no other agency can so effectually influence the reading of boys.

A survey of conditions in the community or neighborhood with relation to individuals may be made by the library itself. Such an investigation of the district surrounding the Woodland branch of the Cleveland public library was conducted by the members of the Western Reserve library school and the branch libraries. The questions covered the nationality of the family; homes in which books other than library books were read; families using a public library; and other recreations of the members of the family. If systematic knowledge of the children in the vicinity of the library is desired, it could be acquired readily through such house-to-house visits. All the juvenile members of the library could be required to re-regis-

ter periodically, thus getting the information from former as well as new members. Where there are cordial relations between school and library, the principal will doubtless be glad to cooperate in having questions answered. A score card might be drawn up along these lines: At the top of the card spaces should be provided for the child's name and address; the school or position if at work; the teacher's name or the employer's business, the grade in school or the grade at which child left school. The rest of the card should be filled out by the teacher or librarian in conference with the child and parent.

Age
 Nationality (or race)
 Reading?
 Five cent weekly
 From public library
 From school
 (Here could be given one or two titles to indicate
 the type of reading)
 Favorite books

 Special interest or hobby
 Recreations
 Favorite study
 The second section of questions is to be filled out
 by the teacher
 Child's special aptitude
 Retarded?
 Advanced?
 Average?
 Should you advise against outside reading?
 Why?

The last set of questions is for the librarian to answer
 Books child reads in library
 What most affects his reading?.....
 His recreations?
 His hobby?
 His work?
 His nationality?
 His mentality?
 Along what lines should reading be encouraged?

A representative of the school or library visiting in the interests of the children is usually received cordially. Interest in their children seems natural to most parents. At least part of the above information ought to be obtained by the librarian in regard to every new juvenile member of the library. Here again there would be economy in having the children's library more closely affiliated with the school. Elaborate records are already kept in many schools, and with library rooms in school buildings these records would be more readily available to the expert director of the children's reading.

In conducting extension work, the library is likely to encroach upon a field in which it is not an expert. Not only that, but the child's reading can scarcely be properly directed without some of the information indicated above. Hence the need for detailed inquiry into conditions to serve as a basis of constructive action.

The intensive phase of the library's service is quite as important as the extensive. By deepening and

strengthening that service which is peculiarly its own to give, the public library might become a stronger social factor than by sharing the work of other agencies.

There is nothing so apparent in American life as the prevailing lack of consideration for the minor interests of others. It is necessary to have a society for the suppression of unnecessary noises because of the lack of elementary gentility. No one can move about in the crowded streets of a large city without being constantly reminded of the general thoughtlessness as to others' rights and comfort.

In the library where children often congregate in crowds, there is an excellent opportunity to establish some of those habits of good manners which are simply extended neighborliness. Discipline in a library depends largely upon low voices and good breeding on the part of assistants. The whole problem of order should be made a matter of social thoughtfulness. The child must learn that he cannot do what would disturb everybody if many should do it. This principle covers the talking which is harmless in itself, but formidable in the bulk. Children have a strong sense of justice, and they can be appealed to when it is a matter of fairness to friends with whom they share the privileges of the library. The fine, which should not be more than a cent a day, is another way of enforcing the social point of view. A book kept out over time is a deprivation to some other person. In some of the Cleveland public library branches the withdrawal of the book privilege for

three days for every day overdue has been substituted for the fine. The proper treatment of public property may be taught by insisting upon the careful handling of books by assistants as well as children.

An important part of the library's social service, and one which is particularly emphasized by some libraries, is the establishment of friendly relations with parents. The best way to learn of the homes and personalities of the children is to go personally to the parents with the child's application card. This may seem an impossible task in a large system, but it is desirable to serve smaller numbers and to know all about those who do take books, instead of having crowds of children whose needs are imperfectly met because they are imperfectly known. By seeing the child's home and talking with his parents, who do not resent the visit when they understand that it is a part of the routine, the librarian not only has a basis for individual work with each child, but she has given the parent a glimpse of a personality behind the institution. This is especially important in the case of foreign children.

The institutions which take the child in hand often ignore the parents and the old world culture which they have brought with them. Gradually the child is alienated from his parents, whom he may grow to despise on account of their ignorance of English and of American customs. Juvenile court records show that the weakening of parental control and authority among the immigrant children is a direct cause of juvenile delinquency.

The literature and some of the handicrafts of the European immigrant would add richness and variety to our American life. That we have been indifferent to these things and in many instances have succeeded in crushing out every sign of national individuality, is due partly to the machinery and methods of education. American self-complacency is generally the reason for this condition of affairs. We have come to assume that the only desirable kind of child is the American child, and that all children should be made after his pattern. Library trustees sometimes object to buying foreign books for the library, as if any tongue save English were barbarous. To such objections one need only point out that it is absurd for a country with a meager literature of its own to deny to the children of older countries the masterpieces which have all the richness of older civilizations. This would exhibit a spirit of arrogance which should no longer be tolerated in educational affairs.

Schools and settlements such as Hull House have been making efforts to bring the immigrant parents and their children into sympathetic touch with each other's interests. By means of the revival of folk dances and the arts and crafts of the industrious European peasant, the adult immigrant is able to arouse the respect of his children and the community. Instead of being shoved aside and ignored, he finds that he too has a contribution to make. The arts, literature, history, and biography of the foreign countries represented here, will some day be recognized in the schools to the social and educational advantage

of all the children. No one becomes a better American by giving up all his national characteristics. "The Pole, Turk, Frenchman, Swede who is loyal to his own land and proud of his descent, rather than the flabby reconstructed specimen who apes all our manners at the expense of his own, makes the best American citizen, because he adds something of positive value to the diversification of elements of which true Americanism is only the higher unity."

By its choice of books the library may have a prominent part in helping children of foreign parents to maintain their interest in their country. Especially among picture books, there are many attractive foreign publications for children. The Webster branch of the New York public library has a collection of artistic Bohemian children's books, and in the children's department of the central library other foreign books are to be found. The supervisor of work with children in the Brooklyn public library has made a special study of foreign picture books for children. In order to get the foreign books for the community, the librarian will find it necessary to know its foreign elements. In small towns there are often large colonies of immigrants who are not in touch with the public library.

In so far as it makes the workers happier and more intelligent and so less likely to become a burden upon the community, the library is fulfilling the functions for which it is supported by the taxpayers. Whenever it undertakes the role of literary guide

* Hall, *Educational problems*, I, 338-9 (1911).

and mentor, or attempts to invade the field of the social settlement, it may fail in these aims and at the same time neglect the duties nearer home which no other organization is equipped to assume. Librarians often believe that in order to be progressive they must carry on some sort of extension work. Almost all of this social work is conducted upon the theory that the contribution made by books to culture and recreation is their most important service. The library may have a mission which is similar to that of the art gallery, but its chief social function is to second the work of the school in preparing children to become intelligent citizens—intelligent not because they are familiar with the classics but because they know how to find in books that information and inspiration which enables them to realize their own capabilities and to be masters of their own particular job.

Public library books, handled, as they are, by a class of people among whom disease is most prevalent, present a social problem of great seriousness. Librarians report that they have never heard of a case of disease known to be transmitted by a book, but hygienists agree that it is not an uncommon occurrence,¹⁰ especially in the case of diseases not reported to libraries by the board of health. "Books," says the *Journal of the American medical association*,¹¹ "are known to have infected people with septicemia and

¹⁰ "Wenn auch bisher sichere Beweise für die Krankheitsübertragung durch Bücher nicht existieren, so sind wir doch auf Grund unserer Kenntnisse von der langen Lebensfähigkeit verschiedener pathogener mikroorganismen ausserhalb des menschlichen Körpers gezwungen die Möglichkeit einer Infektion auf diesem Wege zuzugeben." Ballner, *Über die Desinfektion von Büchern*, 2 (1907).

¹¹ 58: 1201 (1902).

tuberculosis as letters have carried scarlet fever and small-pox." In towns of any size the board of health makes a daily report of contagious diseases to the library. The list does not contain the names of those afflicted with tuberculosis or venereal diseases, both communicable by means of books and the latter in certain forms not uncommon among children.

According to German authorities¹² the only sure method of disinfection is by exposure to moist hot air 30 to 40 per cent humidity at a temperature of 78° to 80° C. for thirty-two hours. One investigator states¹³ that only nine states and twenty-five cities are taking proper precautions against contagion through books. Although public libraries either destroy or disinfect books which have been in the hands of any person at the address reported by the board of health, it is a question whether these precautions are adequate. Thus far there has been no serious consideration of this admittedly difficult problem either on the part of libraries or of public health officials in this country.

An oarsman who should pull vigorously and enthusiastically on his own oar, perhaps ignoring the rower behind or before him with whom his labors conflicted, would be an object of derision. Yet many a child welfare organization, feeling that it is the one indispensable agency, prefers to work without reference to other agencies. How can we wonder that little progress is made and that in spite of the

¹² See Ballner, *Über die Disinfektion von Büchern* (1907), and Sobernheim, *Über Bücherdisinfektion* (1910).

¹³ Nice, *The disinfection of books*. *Pedagogical Seminary*. 18: 197-204 (1911).

thousands of dollars spent on the education of children there are so many aimless young people. "Casting aside for the moment all tradition and ideas of complacency in regard to the present, it would seem that if child welfare and not education is the thing that is really necessary, then we ought to have not a department of schools, but a department of children and that to the general control of this department be relegated all those activities in which children are concerned."¹⁴ Probably we should never be able to account for every child, even by such a comprehensive plan, but we might at least try to prevent duplication and waste and to find the many gaps where nothing is done. Schools, libraries and all other agencies of social service should present an unbroken line of influences in favor of each individual's development. The public library doubtless will never fail to supply all the so-called cultural and classical material called for; the part that it may play in the education of children for capable and intelligent citizenship remains to be determined. We already have opinions as to what it accomplishes; what we need are the facts.

¹⁴ Curtis, A comprehensive plan for child welfare. Child conference for research and welfare. Proceedings, 1910, II, 273-83.

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NOTE:—The equipment and plan of the high school library room is discussed in detail in the report of the National council of English teachers on high school libraries (1915), which can be obtained from J. F. Hosic, Chicago Normal College, and in The high school branch of the public library by McKnight and Dana (American library economy series).

Lists of books to buy for high school libraries are furnished by most state library commissions especially Minnesota, Wisconsin, New York, and Oregon, and by the United States bureau of education.

Lists to aid young people in choosing an occupation have been made by several high schools in collaboration with the librarian, or by social agencies:

Cleveland cooperative bureau for girls. 612 St. Claire Ave. Cleveland, O. To girls about to leave school.

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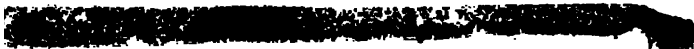
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